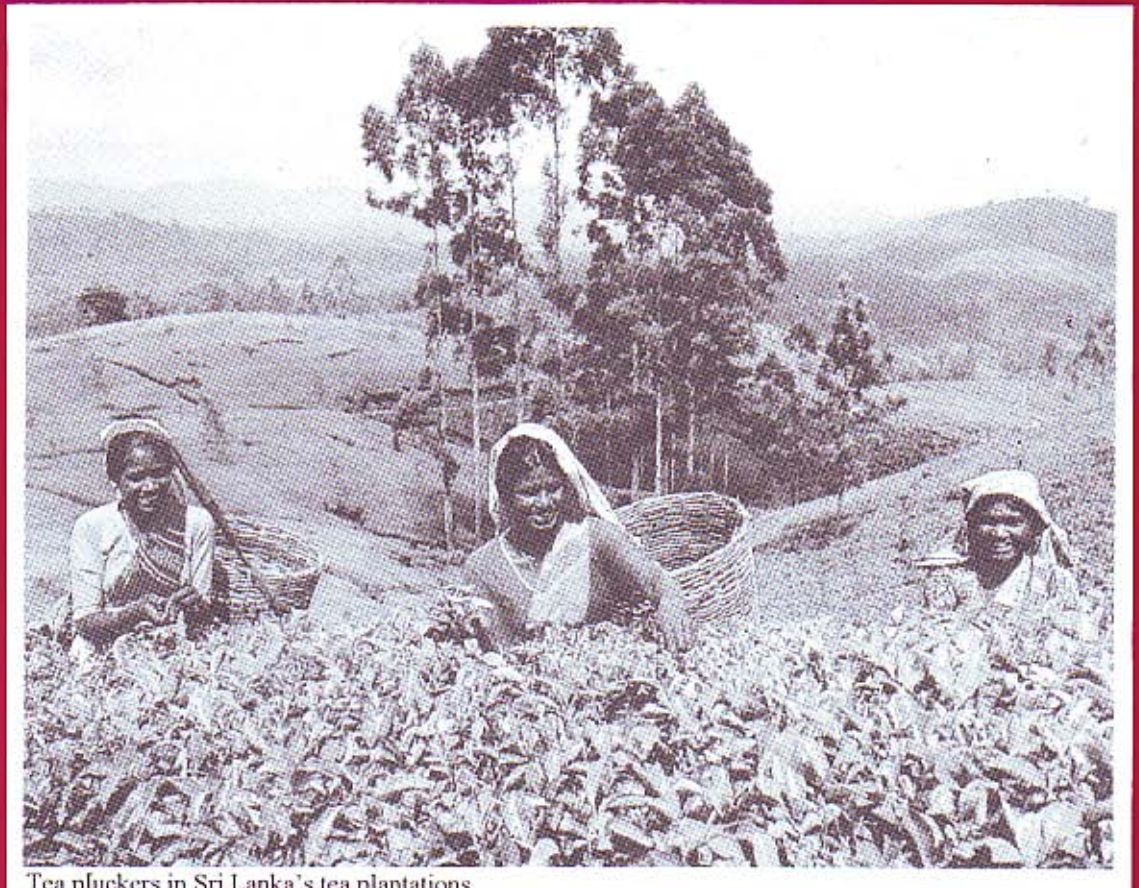
Tamil TIMES

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION
UK/India/Sri Lanka .....£15/US$25
Australia .....Aus$45
(Australian bank cheques only)
Canada .....Can$40
USA.....US$35
All other countries .....£20/US$35

VOL XVII No. 6 ISSN 0266-4488 15 JUNE 1998 90p



Tea pluckers in Sri Lanka's tea plantations

Tamil Nadu Politicians and the Lanka Conflict

The War and Politics of Censorship

Another Killing Field

Prophets of Peace

Standing Up for Rights

Nuclear Adventurism

"I do not agree with a word of what you say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it."
-Voltaire

Tamil TIMES

ISSN 0266 - 44 88
Vol. XVII No. 6
15 JUNE 1998

Published by:
TAMIL TIMES LTD
PO Box 121, Sutton,
Surrey SM1 3TD
United Kingdom
Phone: 0181 644 0972
Fax: 0181 241 4557
Email: prajan@gn.apc.org

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

UK/India/Sri Lanka.....£15/US$25
Australia.....Aus$45
(Australian Bank cheques only)
USA.....US$35
Canada.....Can$40
All other countries..... £20.US$35

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the editor or publishers. The publishers assume no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts, photographs or artwork.

CONTENTS

Tamil Nadu Interest in Lanka	03
Censorship Condemned	05
Jaffna Politics	06
Early Presidential Election?	07
Paris Forum Urges Peace	08
20 Civilians Killed	09
Air Lanka Deal Dispute	09
Strange Bedfellows	10
News in Brief	11
The Politics of Censorship	14
Place for Prophets of Peace?	17
Lessons from the Killing Fields	19
The Hindu and Islamic Bombs	21
Nuclear Adventurism	23
Karunanidhi at 75	25
Standing for Rights	28
Human Rights	29
Classified	30

Medical Mission Jaffna
An Appeal

1998 is an important year in the history of the medical mission of the American Ceylon Mission now the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India. Two Institutions that have faithfully served the people of Jaffna have reached important milestones in their existence.

The Memorial Hospital celebrates its Tercentenary (founded in 1848) as the oldest hospital in Sri Lanka and The Mcleod Hospital for women at Inuvil, its centenary this year. These important anniversaries provide us with the opportunity to give thanks to God almighty for what He has wrought through these Institutions and for the vision and zeal with which many men and women have served in them over these years. It also gives us a chance to rededicate these hospitals for their role in the next millennium.

The Jaffna in which Dr Samuel Fiske Green founded the hospital at Manipay and in which Dr Isabella Curr found herself as the first doctor at Mcleod Hospital was of course vastly different to the Jaffna of today. However, in some respects little has changed. Due to the political situation that has existed in Jaffna over the past two decades, the quality and availability of health care has suffered considerably. Our two hospitals too have suffered in their ability to provide quality health care due to lack of medical staff, loss of equipment and damage to buildings as a result of the civil war. This was made worse by the displacement in 1995-1996, during which time departments such as laboratory, X-ray and operating room had vital equipment looted. In spite of it all these hospitals have provided a vital service to the community even with limited facilities.

In the context of the present situation in which even the Jaffna Teaching Hospital is struggling to serve the people, these Hospitals have an important role to play. There is an urgent need for greater availability of quality health care in the peninsula outside Jaffna town. By improving the facilities available in these two Hospitals and providing affordable care these Institutions can continue to fulfil the objectives of their founders and serve the community.

With this in mind were sending out this appeal to well wishers and friends to raise Ten Million Rupees (£100,000 or US$166,500) to buy equipment, repair buildings and to initiate a Low Cost Care Fund. We hope that through your generous contributions we can continue to fulfil the vision of Green and Curr and many like them who served the people of Jaffna. We thank God for the past and look forward with hope to the future.

Kindly send your donations to the bank account given below. At the same time, please notify Dr (Mrs) C Ambalavanar of the amount that you send. An acknowledgement will be sent.

Green Memorial Ter Centenary Fund,
C/A No.13458,
Commercial Bank of Ceylon Limited,
Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Rt.Rev. Dr S Jebanesan
Bishop J.D.C.S.I.
Vaddukoddai, Jaffna
Sri Lanka

Dr C Ambalavanar
Medical Superintendent
Green Memorial Hospital
Manipay, Sri Lanka

"I do not agree with a word of what you say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it."
-Voltaire

Tamil TIMES

ISSN 0266 - 44 88
Vol. XVII No. 6
15 JUNE 1998

Published by:
TAMIL TIMES LTD
PO Box 121, Sutton,
Surrey SM1 3TD
United Kingdom
Phone: 0181 644 0972
Fax: 0181 241 4557
Email: prajan@gn.apc.org

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

UK/India/Sri Lanka.....£15/US$25
Australia.....Aus$45
(Australian Bank cheques only)
USA.....US$35
Canada.....Can$40
All other countries..... £20.US$35

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the editor or publishers. The publishers assume no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts, photographs or artwork.

CONTENTS

Tamil Nadu Interest in Lanka	03
Censorship Condemned	05
Jaffna Politics	06
Early Presidential Election?	07
Paris Forum Urges Peace	08
20 Civilians Killed	09
Air Lanka Deal Dispute	09
Strange Bedfellows	10
News in Brief	11
The Politics of Censorship	14
Place for Prophets of Peace?	17
Lessons from the Killing Fields	19
The Hindu and Islamic Bombs	21
Nuclear Adventurism	23
Karunanidhi at 75	25
Standing for Rights	28
Human Rights	29
Classified	30

Medical Mission Jaffna
An Appeal

1998 is an important year in the history of the medical mission of the American Ceylon Mission now the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India. Two Institutions that have faithfully served the people of Jaffna have reached important milestones in their existence.

The Memorial Hospital celebrates its Tercentenary (founded in 1848) as the oldest hospital in Sri Lanka and The Mcleod Hospital for women at Inuvil, its centenary this year. These important anniversaries provide us with the opportunity to give thanks to God almighty for what He has wrought through these Institutions and for the vision and zeal with which many men and women have served in them over these years. It also gives us a chance to rededicate these hospitals for their role in the next millennium.

The Jaffna in which Dr Samuel Fiske Green founded the hospital at Manipay and in which Dr Isabella Curr found herself as the first doctor at Mcleod Hospital was of course vastly different to the Jaffna of today. However, in some respects little has changed. Due to the political situation that has existed in Jaffna over the past two decades, the quality and availability of health care has suffered considerably. Our two hospitals too have suffered in their ability to provide quality health care due to lack of medical staff, loss of equipment and damage to buildings as a result of the civil war. This was made worse by the displacement in 1995-1996, during which time departments such as laboratory, X-ray and operating room had vital equipment looted. In spite of it all these hospitals have provided a vital service to the community even with limited facilities.

In the context of the present situation in which even the Jaffna Teaching Hospital is struggling to serve the people, these Hospitals have an important role to play. There is an urgent need for greater availability of quality health care in the peninsula outside Jaffna town. By improving the facilities available in these two Hospitals and providing affordable care these Institutions can continue to fulfil the objectives of their founders and serve the community.

With this in mind were sending out this appeal to well wishers and friends to raise Ten Million Rupees (£100,000 or US$166,500) to buy equipment, repair buildings and to initiate a Low Cost Care Fund. We hope that through your generous contributions we can continue to fulfil the vision of Green and Curr and many like them who served the people of Jaffna. We thank God for the past and look forward with hope to the future.

Kindly send your donations to the bank account given below. At the same time, please notify Dr (Mrs) C Ambalavanar of the amount that you send. An acknowledgement will be sent.

Green Memorial Ter Centenary Fund,
C/A No.13458,
Commercial Bank of Ceylon Limited,
Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Rt.Rev. Dr S Jebanesan
Bishop J.D.C.S.I.
Vaddukoddai, Jaffna
Sri Lanka

Dr C Ambalavanar
Medical Superintendent
Green Memorial Hospital
Manipay, Sri Lanka

Revival of Tamil Nadu Interest in the Sri Lankan Conflict

There is distinct unease in Colombo these days particularly following the sudden and unpredicted revival of interest in Sri Lanka's ongoing ethnic conflict on the part of politicians from the south Indian State of Tamil Nadu.

Leaders and politicians representing three political parties in Tamil Nadu backing the ruling Baratiya Janatha Party (BJP) at the centre in Delhi asked the Sri Lankan government on 10 June to withdraw its security forces from the Northeast of the country inhabited predominantly by the island's Tamil community.

The demand was contained in a memorandum submitted by the parties to India's Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, in which they accused Colombo of committing "genocide" against its Tamil population. The memorandum was signed by 15 politicians from the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, including former chief minister and AIADMK leader Jayaram Jayalalitha, Dr S Ramadoss, leader of the PMK, and V Gopalasamay, leader of the MDMK.

All these three parties, the main one being Jayalalitha's AIADMK party, constitute a united front which provide vital support to Vajpayee's three-month-old coalition government in New Delhi. The political significance of the latest development in Tamil Nadu is that the stance of these parties is bound to have an impact on the Indian central government because Vajpayee's BJP on its own does not have a majority in the Indian parliament and therefore has to depend on its coalition of regional parties for its survival. The AIADMK-led alliance controls 27 of Tamil Nadu's 39 parliamentary seats which are critical for the survival of the Vajpayee government in New Delhi.

The statement said the Indian parties were "deeply concerned" about the protracted ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, which has claimed thousands of lives over the past two decades. It also urged Vajpayee to deputise an Indian parliamentary delegation from Tamil Nadu to visit Sri Lankan north, where heavy fighting is raging between government troops and the Tamil Tigers (LTTE).

The statement accused Colombo of imposing an economic blockade against areas inhabited by its Tamil minority. "Tamils from Sri Lanka escaping this genocidal onslaught continue to arrive in Tamil Nadu," it said.

The memorandum, however, made no mention of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which is fighting for independence in the north and east of Sri Lanka. The LTTE is outlawed in India. However, one of the prominent signatories to the statement and an outspoken supporter of the

LTTE, S. Ramdas, whose PMK party is a member of the Vajpayee government, said he considered the LTTE as "a liberation movement." "But we don't want the LTTE to come to Tamil Nadu," he added.

The LTTE once found sanctuary and considerable support from both politicians and the people in Tamil Nadu. However, after its involvement in masterminding the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, the LTTE was outlawed in India and the previous support it had literally evaporated.

It is said that the AIADMK leader Jayalalitha went along with Dr Ramadoss of the PMK and V Gopalasamy of the MDMK, who are known to be outspoken supporters of the LTTE, to resurrect the Sri Lankan Tamil issue at this time as a tactical move to bring more pressure on Prime Minister Vajpayee to obtain the dismissal of the elected State government of Tamil Nadu led by M Karunanidhi of the DMK. Reflecting this view, Malini Parthasarathi of The Hindu wrote, "The latest instrument in the game of wits between the BJP and the AIADMK front is the resurrection of what was hitherto a virtually moribund tool of

Tamil Nadu politicians - the highly sensitive issue of the Sri Lankan Tamils." This correspondent also draws attention to the attempt by the authors of the memorandum to raise the Hindu chauvinist card: "The memorandum has been consciously couched in language designed to appeal to Hindu chauvinism. The

leaders have expressed concern not only about the death of thousands of Tamil civilians but also that "several Hindu temples (estimated to be over 1800) have been destroyed". In what constitutes a sectarian twist to the traditional affirmation of ethnic solidarity by Tamil political parties, the AIADMK and its allies have said that "the feeling for their Hindu-Tamil brothers in Sri Lanka is deepseated." This is a clear departure from the stance adopted by political parties in Tamil Nadu which have only stressed ethnic affinity and have never spoken of religious identity in relation to the Sri Lankan Tamils."

Another report in "The Hindu" of 13 June said:

"In their anxiety to build up pressure on the Vajpayee Government, the AIADMK and its allies have brought the Sri Lankan Tamils problem back into focus by calling upon the Centre to intervene in the affairs of the island nation.

Although there are differences within the AIADMK front on dealing with the Sri Lankan Tamils issue, the memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister, Mr Vajpayee, by the representatives of the front takes the hardline stance of the PMK founder, Dr S Ramadoss.

Some of the allies were not taken into confidence before drafting the memorandum, but all of them went along, only because they agreed with the core subject of protecting the lives and properties of innocent Sri Lankan Tamils.

The draft was basically prepared by Dr Ramadoss, who led the delegation to New Delhi; but the AIADMK did some "dilution" before seeking the signatures of the other allies.

The memorandum mentions "Tamil homeland," another word for "Eelam," and urges the Centre to sponsor a Parliamentary delegation from Tamil Nadu to visit that area to assess the situation. It also wants the Centre to persuade the Sri Lankan Government to withdraw its armed forces from the Tamil homeland and an immediate halt to the military offensive now underway. There is a general feeling that these specific demands are intended to help the LTTE. This runs against the stated policy of the AIADMK and some of the other allies, such as the Janata Party president, Dr Subramanian Swamy, and the TRC leader, Mr Vazhapadi K Ramamurthy.

The "suddenness" with which the Sri Lankan issue has cropped up as a priority for the AIADMK front has sent ripples in political circles. Until now, none of the major parties had anything to say on the situation in Sri Lanka. Indeed, the issue did not figure in the two executive committee meetings of the AIADMK in April and May. Those meetings had passed resolutions on various issues, including reservation, Cauvery, power bill, problems of farmers. But the Sri Lankan issue did not come up at all. However, the manner in which the AIADMK front leaders and MPs went in a delegation to meet the Prime Minister over the issue gives the impression that there is some new-found urgency.

The AIADMK, by approving the PMK stance on the issue, seems to be repaying Dr Ramadoss for his growing anti-DMKism. However, Ms Jayalalitha chose not to lead the delegation, unlike in the case of issues such as Cauvery and reservation. Senior leaders say that the AIADMK identifies with the PMK stance only to the extent that innocent Tamils should not be caught in the cross-fire between the Sri Lankan Army and the LTTE.

Although Mr Ramamurthy's name figured in the signatories list of the memorandum, he did not affix his signature on. According to sources close to Dr Swamy, the Janata Party leader went with the delegation mainly to harp on the dismissal issue. The MDMK, it appears, was not consulted on the drafting of the memorandum, but the party MPs signed it as there was "broad agreement" on the contents.

Dr Ramadoss, by way of explaining the need for the memorandum, said in a statement today that the DMK had done nothing for the cause of the Sri Lankan Tamils. That party had, however, politicised the issue for its gains during the MGR period. The issue should be seen on "humanitarian" grounds, he said and thanked the AIADMK General Secretary, Ms Jayalalitha, for her efforts in enabling the handing over of the memorandum to the Prime Minister.

The PMK representative in the Union Ministry, Mr Dalit Ezhilmalai, denies that the Sri Lankan issue was used as a cover for demanding the dismissal of the DMK Government. "This is a problem that is 15 years old. There is nothing wrong in demanding that a Parliamentary delegation be sent to Sri Lanka. Does not the Amnesty International want to visit Kashmir?" Mr Ezhilmalai defends the submission of the memorandum now when the issue does not seem to be generating any heat in Tamil Nadu. "There is no good time or bad time for raising an issue such as this," he says. Parliament was in session and the

AIADMK front MPs decided to present the memorandum to the Prime Minister in Delhi, he adds. ●

Censorship Condemned

On June 5, the Government of Sri Lanka suddenly imposed full, strict censorship of all reports relating to the war being fought in the north and east of the island. Local and international coverage of the war is prohibited, as is any discussion by the media of the actions of police and military officials. All reports, photographs, and videotapes must pass a military censor, army general Jaliya Nammuni. This is the first time a military censor has been appointed; in the past, such as most recently in 1995, the censors have been civilians.

The Sri Lanka media group, Free Media Movement condemned the government for imposing censorship on reports relating the ongoing war, denouncing it as a violation of the democratic rights of the people. It also asked the government to withdraw the restrictions.

"It is a flagrant violation of the commitment made by this government in its election manifesto to defend media freedom," the Free Media Movement (FMM) said in a statement on 9 June.

The FMM, which has in the past taken up media-related issues, said it was concerned that a military officer has for the first time been appointed to be responsible for censoring military news.

"The Free Media movement believes that the imposition of censorship is aimed at preventing the media from reporting the truth about the war to the people of this country," the statement said.

"Therefore, it is obvious that this is more a part of a political strategy than a military requirement," it added.

The move has attracted widespread criticism where other media and human rights groups and the main opposition United National Party have questioned the need for censorship.

The FMM the government's decision to impose censorship in the past had proved it could not prevent people from getting to know about the losses and setbacks suffered by the military in the course of the conflict. The government imposed censorship in September 1995, but lifted restrictions on foreign media four days later.

"It is already clear that censorship of military news is aimed at making only the state version and pronouncements about the war available to the people," the statement said.

"This censorship will also prohibit accurate reporting of whatever discussions on the ethnic conflict that takes place during the forthcoming elections campaign for the Provincial Council," it added.

"The Free Media Movement strongly feels that this would restrict the ability of the people to make an informed choice at the elections."

The government's censorship has also been condemned by the international press watchdog, the Vienna-based International Press Institute (IPI) on 10 june.

IPI said the ban was a "flagrant breach" of pledges by the government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga on press freedom.

"IPI is concerned that the imposition of censorship on military news will make only the official, state version of the war available to Sri Lankans," it said in an open letter to the Sri Lankan President.

"We regard this censorship as a flagrant breach of the government's election pledge to uphold press freedom in Sri Lanka," it added.

The International Committee for the Protection of Journalists has written to the President expressing their disappointment over the govt decision to impose a press censorship on war and sensitive news, which they feel should not have happened at all, especially after creating a Media Charter recently at a Media Conference in Colombo attended by both the govt and the opposition, that clearly opposed such. They have also condemned the appointment of a Military official as the competent authority of the press censorship.

The US NGO Forum on Sri Lanka, a non-partisan network of organisations in the United States working for human rights and peace in Sri Lanka, condemns the imposition of this censorship. Despite Sri Lanka's claim to being a democracy, the government has often interfered with the media. Particularly where the war is concerned, government control has been prevalent. Journalists have consistently been forbidden from entering conflict zones, often referred to as "uncleared areas."

It is extremely distressing that while the media has been allowed to report fully on conflicts such as Bosnia, Northern Ireland, and even Chechnya, a tragedy is being played out behind closed doors on this small island.

In a letter to President Chandrika Kumaratunga, the Forum stated, "The censorship seems to indicate a lack of respect for the basic freedoms of speech and information. It is our fear that the censorship will weaken the government and security forces' accountability in Sri Lanka and decrease the possibilities for respect of human rights."

The Forum strongly urged the government to immediately lift the censorship, and to adhere to its previously stated commitment to freedom of the press.

Jaffna and the Fear Psychosis

It is learnt that an atmosphere of intense fear has gripped the people in the Northern Jaffna peninsula following the murder of Jaffna Mayor Srojini Yogeswaran. Informed sources from the peninsula say that non-LTTE politicians who participated the local government elections in January this year, important government servants, including Magistrates have received threatening letters from the "Sangilian Force". According to one source, people are in a state of terrible fear psychosis in anticipation of a string of political killings, some of which have already taken place and others are yet to follow.

The threat of political assassinations has led to a situation where elected councillors in the peninsula have been seeking safer places and security forces are finding it more and more difficult every day to provide adequate security to these Councillors who are expected to live and work openly.

Threatening letters of various kinds are being sent to all sorts of people. One day they are in the name of the "Ellalan Group", the next day in the name of "Sangilian Force" and on the third day in the name of the "Pandara Vanniyan Group", but many believe that the persons involved are the same. Out of the nine TULF members elected to the Jaffna Municipal Council five has resigned already after the assassination of Jaffna Mayor Sarojini. A spokesman of TULF stated that these members resigned from their posts due to threats levelled at them.

Meanwhile, the Jaffna district Assistant Election Commissioner has informed EPDP, PLOT and TELO that the appointment of 115 local council members of theirs in Jaffna district have been automatically cancelled since they have failed to swear in within the prescribed three months period. These members have failed to swear in within three months of these Local Councils being declared functional.

Recently there have been more warning letters sent to members of all Local councils in the Jaffna peninsula which are signed in the name of "Freedom Lovers of the Tamil Race". These councilors are issued the warning through these letters that if they do not resign immediately, they will also be given the same fate as the assassinated Jaffna mayor Sarojini.

It is learnt that a TULF Member of Parliament hailing from Batticaloa has suggested that all TULF members should resign from the Municipal Council, but the newly appointed Jaffna Mayor Sivapalan is said to be dead against it. He is asking the Batticaloa TULF MP, who is known not to make any statement that would even marginally be considered as critical of the LTTE, to resign from his Parliamentary seats first before advising others to do so.

The internal sources of TULF reveals that all attempts being made by the TULF hierarchy to appoint fresh members to the seats of Jaffna Municipal Council which fell vacant after an avalanche of resignations took place after the assassination of their Mayor, do not seem to succeed since most ofthe new appointees have refused the appointments. Deputy Mayor of JMC Thiruwanakarusu resigned soon after TULF appointed Mr. Sivapalan as the new chairman over looking him and five others followed suit immediately afterwards. It is said that TULF has proposed five others for these posts, who did not contest the Polls.

The TULF took another blow when the vice-president of its Jaffna branch, S. Namasivayam, was brutally hacked to death near his home close to the Vyravar

Temple in the military controlled area of the Jaffna town at about noon on 5 June. Namasivayam, who was also secretary of the Jaffna District Traders' Association, had cycled to his home at Ottumadam for lunch when a group of assailants who had been lying in wait attacked him with cutting instruments. Death had been almost instantaneous.

Early Presidential Election?

It is learnt that a strong group within the ruling People's Alliance is applying pressure upon the President Kumaratunga and the PA leadership to postpone the Provincial Council elections due in August, and instead go straight for Presidential elections.

The terms of five provincial councils, or state assemblies Uva, Sabaragamuwa, Central, Northcentral and Western provinces - end in June.

The President has three more years to complete her term of six years, and it is said that she would not agree to the group's proposal unless such a course becomes politically imperative.

This group of MPs is of the view that the UNP would never support the government's devolution proposals, and the only way to make progress is for the President to resign and for presidential election to be held combined with a referendum on the government's devolution proposals to obtain a mandate from the people. They argue that, though the government may be unpopular, in a presidential contest between Chandrika Kumaratunga and the UNP leader Rani Wickremasinghe, Chandrika would win by a mile. They also say that the momentum created by such a presidential election would enable the government to obtain the support of the majority of the voters in a referendum on the government's devolution proposals.

In spite of the strong pressure from this group of MPs to follow their advice, political observers in Colombo do not believe that the government would indulge in such a high-risk political gamble.

Meanwhile it is reported that serious internal infighting has emerged among the many rival factions within the UNP over nominations to the forthcoming Provincial council elections. Some leaders of these factions claim that UNP

leader Ranil Wickramasinghe is not living up to his pledge that he will appoint only the most suitable as candidates and is adopting a rather flexible approach concerning some of his close friends who are totally unsuitable.

It is also learnt that former President Premadasa's wife Hema and his strong-arm man Srisena Cooray have ganged up to form a powerful faction within the UNP and are planning to forward their own candidates on UNP ticket and have gone to the extent of threatening the UNP leadership that their candidates would contest as independents if their members are not given tickets. It is also said that Hema Premadasa has indicated to the UNP leader if she is not given the official UNP ticket to contest the provincial council elections from Colombo district and if she is not made the chief organiser of the "Colombo Central" Electorate, her late husband's forte, she will launch a separate campaign all over the Island with the intention of attracting all pro-Premadasa votes. It is reported that the recent string of religious festivities and volunteer campaigns organised in the Kataragama area by Hema Premadasa and her son Sajith, were meant to show the party leadership the extent of their power and strength.

It is also revealed that there is a deliberate attempt by the UNP leadership to exclude and refuse nomination to those who are perceived as friends of Anura Bandaranaike with a view to isolating and weakening his position within the party.

The probability is that provincial council elections will likely be held in August this year. If they are held the question is as to whether the elections will be a free and fair one and as to what issues and slogans will the contending parties raise before the people who are asked to vote. There is also a fear that the election may be accompanied by violence and large scale electoral malpractices including attempts at massive impersonation.

Non-governmental election monitoring bodies are already gearing up to this prospect, and it is expected that these bodies will urge the leaders of all major parties to publicly call upon their respective support groups and campaign teams to desist from resorting to any form of violence or ir-

Mayor Sarojini Cremated in Colombo

Hurt and anger writ on their faces, hundreds of people on 19 May filed past the coffin of the Mayor of the Municipal Council of Jaffna, the capital city in peninsula, whose brutal killing shocked and terrified most of the people.All shops in Jaffna remained closed as a mark of respect to slain Mayor.

People mourned silently as the coffin was lifted from its resting place at Jaffna's Town Hall building that was filled with flowers. The coffin, draped in the red and yellow flag of Yogeswaran's Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) party, was put in a hearse and taken to the nearby airport for a flight to Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo.

"She died a hero's death," TULF Vice President Veerasingham Anandasangari told the mourners. "A lot of people did not want her to contest the elections, but she felt that she had a duty by the people."

It appears that Sarojini's wish was that, if anything tragic were to happen to her, her funeral should be held in Jaffna among the people whom she was determined to serve. But circumstances were such that even her last wish could not be fulfilled. Her close relatives who were in Colombo feared for their own safety and declined the offer of the government to transport them to Jaffna, and hence Sarojini's body was flown to Colombo where her cremation took place attended by a large gathering of people belonging to all communities and religions, including politicians from all parties, human rights activists and members of the diplomatic community. One Tamil journalist was heard to comment that what is tragic about the situation in which Tamils find themselves is that there is no freedom for them even for a funeral to be held in those parts which are claimed to be their homeland.

regularities.

Parting of the Ways ?

Ceylon Workers Congress headed by Minister Thondaman, has decided finally that they will contest the forthcoming Provincial council elections under their own sign the Rooster, without doing so in People's Alliance tickets. A senior member of the Party stated that this is an experiment planned by them to find out why they suffered deeply when ever elections are contested on the PA ticket, when they were winning convincingly while they were with the UNP. He also stated that, after analysing the PC polls results, their party will decide who they are going to support at the next General elections.

Thondaman's link with Peoples Alliance has always been a tenuous one. Not only others, he himself thinks that he is a semi-detached member of the Kumaratunga cabinet often making public statements which can be regarded as breaching the rules relating to cabinet collective responsibility.

Political observers are speculating whether the decision of the CWC to contest the forthcoming elections is the beginning of the process of the parting of the ways between the PA and Thondaman's CWC.

The Case of Mr Mendis

It is understood that the chief national organiser of the opposition United National Party and Member of Parliament, Wijeyapala Mendis, who is facing the prospect of his civic rights being abolished and expelled from Parliament after being found guilty of being involved in a land scam by a Special Commission being involved in a land swindle, has defied the party leader Ranil Wickremasinghe's several appeals to voluntarily resign his seat.

Because of his refusal to resign, the UNP leadership appointed a Disciplinary Committee to investigate the allegations against Mr Mendis who has in a 12-page challenging response asserted that the Committee has no legal right or power to conduct a disciplinary investigation against him.

However, as an alternative, Mr Mendis has offered to resign from all party positions, if he is allowed to retain his seat in the Parliament for the remaining two years, at the end of which he will step down from politics.

It is learnt that, overruling stiff opposition from the government group, the Speaker of the Parliament K.B. Ratnayake has given his approval to grant five hours of speaking time to Mendis during the scheduled debate on the proposal to abolish his civic rights and expel him from the Parliament on corruption charges. This is a new record in the Parliament's history, where such a lengthy time allocation being granted to an MP accused of corruption, to exonerate himself if he can.

LTTE Information Material Can be Distributed US Court Rules

The United States Court for the Central District of California on 8 June ruled that the actions of the World Tamil Co-ordinating Committee (WTCC) which distributed LTTE literature and informational materials on LTTE throughout the United States were protected by the First Amendment to the US Constitution (relating to freedom of expression) and accordingly the Plaintiffs were entitled to a preliminary injunction on this ground but the judge denied the Plaintiffs' motion for an injunction with respect to provision of material support to the LTTE and Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

"Judge Audrey Collins ruling yesterday ensures that there is no prohibition in distributing LTTE literature, transmitting LTTE materials and promoting LTTE by using human resources," said legal sources.

Oral argument took place on 8 June on a Motion for Preliminary Injunction in the case of Humanitarian Law Project vs Reno, in which five Tamil associations and a Federation comprising of 30 Tamil organisations, among others, asked the California Court to issue a preliminary injunction enjoining Attorney General Reno from enforcing provisions of the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (AEDPA) that made it a crime to provide material support for the lawful activities of the LTTE and the PKK.

The Court observed that "the AEDPA does not prevent Plaintiffs from engaging in political expression or advocating on behalf of or associating with others who believe in the causes championed by the PKK and the LTTE."

The AEPDA defines "material support or resources" as "currency or other financial securities, financial services, lodging, training, safehouses, false documentation or identification, communications equipment, facilities, weapons, lethal substances, explosives, personnel, transportation, and other physical assets, except medicine or religious materials."

Judge Audrey Collins, in a tentative decision, indicated that the terms "personnel" and "training" in the statute are impermissively vague and violated the United States Constitution. Judge Collins granted an injunction on this ground and severed those terms from the Statute.

With respect to the prohibition on the provision of other material support to the LTTE and the PKK, the Court said that this prohibition was unrelated to the protections accorded to freedom of speech and association by the United States Constitution and thus denied the Plaintiffs' motion for injunction in relation to that.

"The Judge will issue the final order in the next few days and it is expected that both the Plaintiffs and the United States Government will file expedited appeals to the Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit," said legal sources.

Paris Forum Urges Parties to Rise Above Politics

Delegates who attended the Sri Lanka Development Forum in Paris on 26 and 27 May expressed deep concern that prospects were not more encouraging for a prompt end to the conflict which has lasted for 15 years while commending the government of Sri Lanka for its efforts to pursue economic reforms while seeking a peaceful solution to the civil war. They also urged all parties in Sri Lanka to put the future of their country above politics in an effort

to end the enormous toll in human suffering and foregone economic development. The Development Forum, otherwise known as the Paris Consortium, was chaired by Ms. Mieko Nishimizu, Vice President, South Asia Region, and Mr. Roberto Bentjerodt, Country Director for Sri Lanka, both of the World Bank. Representatives from 20 countries and international organisations participated in the meeting to determine the allocation of development aid for Sri Lanka.

It was noted that economic growth levels in Sri Lanka had climbed despite intense fighting in the north and east of the island. Last year, the growth rate was 6.4 percent - higher than most of its "tiger economies" in Asia - up from 3.8 percent in 1996 when the war and a series of crippling public sector strikes curbed growth.

Delegates praised the government for its progress in improving macroeconomic stability since the last meeting in late 1996. But they noted that additional structural reforms were needed to ensure macroeconomic stability and promote private sector-led growth and employment. They stressed the importance of good governance in creating an environment for private investment, as well as in building a cohesive society. Good governance was important, if the country wished to attract more private investment.

Delegates voiced concern that the planned improvement in governance had been hampered by problems in the mechanism to enforce higher standards for transparency. They welcomed the government's commitment to reinforce this mechanism. Development partners assured the government of their support for efforts to improve the effectiveness of public administration at all levels and to strengthen the government procurement capacity.

Delegates focused in particular on the education system and the need to improve its quality. Efforts were needed to reorient education policies to promote equity and social and ethnic harmony. Development partners welcomed the government's intention to address these issues in an open manner involving all members of civil society, including NGOs.

They also expressed concern that prospects were not more encouraging for a prompt end to the conflict with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The delegates had commended the government for its efforts to devolve authority to the regions as part of a peaceful solution to the 15 year old conflict and with the help of development partners, to improve the lives of people in the areas affected by the war. But they deplored the growing tragic impact of the war on the entire nation and the enormous toll of the war in terms of human lives and lost opportunities for economic development and urged all parties in Sri Lanka to put the future of their country above politics and unite in the cause of peace and prosperity.

The delegates reaffirmed their support for the general thrust of Sri Lanka's economic and social development by indicating financial support for the coming year in a sum of $780 million. They also promised that more assistance would also be made available for reconstruction in the North-East in the event of peace.

20 KILLED AND MORE THAN 50 INJURED

In a statement dated 10 June, the LTTE said, "In a carefully planned attack, the Sri Lankan Air Force and the Artillery units of the Sri Lankan Army based in Elephant Pass and Karipatta Murrippu today carried out a massive raid on the civilian settlements of Suthanthirapuram area of Mullaitivu district.

Two Kfir war planes belonging to the Sri Lankan Air Force carried out a massive bombing raid on the civilian habitations at 9.15 am this morning. More than 20 civilians were killed on the spot and more than 50 were critically injured. Many dwellings were set on fire.

Immediately after the bombers had left the scene the artillery pieces of Elephant Pass and Karipatta Murippu opened fire targeting the bombed out area. Many more were killed and injured in this massive shell fire. Bodies were hard to identify and a search operation is being conducted in the rubble to recover the buried bodies. Human flesh and bones are scattered everywhere.

As most of the civilian dwellings are ruined the survivors are leaving the area carrying their belongings. Fearing to stay in the vicinity most of the inhabitants of the adjoining settlements have fled to distant parts. A mass displacement of civilians has begun by this sudden attack on civilian habitations.

Hospitals are overflowing with the injured. The Vanni hospitals and their staff are ill-equipped to meet an emergency situation of this nature. There are no bandages, antibiotics and beds. In Pudukudiyiruppu Hospital alone 40 injured are laid on the floor. The condition of six among this 40 are critical. Details of those admitted to the other hospitals such as Tharmapuram are not available.

Another statement issued on the following day (11.6.98) by the LTTE identified the names and ages of 17 persons killed, and 34 persons injured. In addition to these, the statement also gave details of five LTTE fighters who were also killed - three women and two men.

Air Lanka Deal Goes to Bribery Commission

The main opposition United National Party(UNP) and the privately owned print media have been alleging serious irregularities and corruption in the partial privatisation deal with Emirates Airlines of Sri Lanka's flag career, Air Lanka, entered into by the government.

In an attempt to exculpate itself from these serious allegations, the government offered the opposition a chance to debate the deal in parliament. The debate was telecast live as an example of the government's policy of transparency. Those members of the public who listened to the debate are reported to have said that there was too much hot air generated in the air-conditioned chamber and little light shed about the transaction during the debate.

The Opposition UNP leader, who

had previously threatened in public to cancel the whole deal if his party came back to power, when challenged by a Minister whether he would in fact do so, is reported to have remained diplomatically mute. The normally eloquent Anura Bandaranaike, now a leading figure in the UNP who is known not to have much brotherly affection for his sister President Kumaratunga, also is reported to have remained uncharacteristically silent when the same Minister challenged him to confirm or deny that President Kumaratunga never indulged in corruption.

In another move, the UNP has asked the Bribery Commission to investigate the recent sale of a 40 percent stake in Air Lanka, which it said stank of corruption. Gamini Athukorale, general secretary of the UNP, went to the office of the Commission to Investigate Bribery & Corruption in Colombo on 28 May and handed officials a letter asking them to begin investigations into the deal.

Athukorale said he was prepared to furnish documentary evidence to support his claims.

The government last month signed a deal with Dubai's Emirates airlines to sell a 40 percent stake and management in Air Lanka for $70 million to be paid in two tranches - $45 million on signing the deal and the rest two years later.

"The manner in which this entire transaction has been handled leads me to but one conclusion," Athukorale said in the letter.

"The privatisation of Air Lanka was done with a view to obtaining an illegal or wrongful gain or advantage by some persons or would cause wrongful loss to the Government of Sri Lanka and/or give wrongful advantage to Emirates," he added.

Athukorale said correct bidding processes had not been adhered to and Emirates had been favoured by officials of the Public Enterprises Reform Commission (PERC), Sri Lanka's privatisation body.

Prelates' Anger OverProbe into Temple Funds

The Chief Mahanayakes of the Dalada Maligawa Buddhist temple are reported to be upset over recent revelations of alleged misuse and misappropriation of funds involving local and foreign donations made for the repair and renovation of the temple which was the target of a LTTE bomb attack on in late January this year.

Following these revealations, a preliminary inquiry conducted by the Commissioner of Buddhist Affairs on the instructions of the Minister of Cultural Affairs is reported to have established that there was in fact serious irregularities the handling of the temple funds. The person in charge of these temple funds is the Diyawadana Nilame, Neranjan Wijeratne.

On receipt of the findings of the preliminary inquiry, President Kumaratunga directed the Secretary to the Treasury to launch a formal investigation into the whole affair. In her letter of instructions she asked the Secretary to appoint a qualified Accountant to undertake a thorough and detailed investigation into the handling of the funds and send the findings directly to the chief prelates of Asgiriya and Malwatte chapters as well.

The chief prelates in angry response have written to the President alleging that they were strongly of the opinion that the President had belittled them by making unnecessary statements through the newspapers, when she could have asked them first about anything she wanted to know about the Dalada Temple finances. They also have indicated that they would never tolerate the interference from Cultural Minister contrary to the powers vested on these Temples through the Buddhist Temples Property Act .

The two prelates and the Diyawadana Nilame of the Dalada Temple, have also threatened to boycott the meetings of the "Dalada Temple Reconstruction Advisory Committee" which normally meets under chairmanship of the Cultural Minister.

LTTE Accuses USA

In a recent report in the official organ of the LTTE, the Tamil Tiger leadership has complained against the United States support for the Sri Lankan government's war effort and alleged American intervention in Sri Lankan internal affairs. They also allege that the US government has increased their aid to Sri Lanka and pressing Tamil political parties to accept the political solutions of the government.

"Senior administrative officers of the US government, high ranking army officers and Special Task Force trainees travel now and then to Sri Lanka, where they go to army camps in the North-East of the island and have discussions with the Army Generals. It has also sent modern surveillance equipment to the Sri Lankan forces, in order to detect LTTE camps and destroy them. On the whole it is bent on increasing the military strength of the Sri Lankan Army and strengthen their own foothold and involvement in Sri Lankan affairs," the official organ of the LTTE, "Viduthalai Puligal", said.

Strange Bedfellows

Although the LTTE has not officially commented, pro-LTTE Tamil nationalist circles among expatriate Tamils living in the west seem to have come out strongly in support of India carrying out the recent nuclear bomb tests at the behest of the Hindu nationalist BJP government provoking Pakistan to conduct its own tests almost in act of retaliation.

While in India itself opinion among political parties, scientists, academics and journalists is sharply divided over the issue of the rights and wrongs of their government's action, in Sri Lanka sections which can be described as the extremist Sinhala-Buddhist nationalists and stridently anti-LTTE also have come out in strong support for the Indian nuclear tests. Even the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), one of the fundamental founding and guiding tenents of which was based on "anti-Indian expansionism", and which unleashed a reign of terror under the pretext of fighting against the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987 and the induction of the Indian peace Keeping Force(IPKF), has come out with a statement that India "was perfectly justified" in conducting its nuclear tests in its effort to become a nuclear power, since all nations in this

world had the right to possess nuclear arms until such time as all major powers in the world had disarmed themselves of their frightening nuclear arsenal. The JVP's Sinhala journal "Niya-muwa" states that the US authorities have decided to make use of the LTTE as a regional pawn against India, which has antagonised the US government by conducting the recent nuclear tests.

Another Sinhala journal which normally reflects extremist Sinhala-Buddhist nationalist and anti LTTE sentiments went a step further and commented with a distinctly pro-Indian, but anti-LTTE posture: "Indian intelligence organisation, the Reserach and Analysis Wing(RAW) has learnt that America is trying to teach a lesson to India making use of the Sri Lankan Tigers, as they are furious with India for experimenting in nuclear weapons. It is said that current American plans are to provide a new shipment of sophisticated military equipment to the Tigers including armour plated vehicles, aggravate the internal crisis in Sri Lanka and hurt India by using the LTTE. Soon after the Indian government learnt about this move, it handed over entire security of the Indian Ocean to the Indian Navy, vowing that they would never allow America or the Tigers to use the Indian Ocean as they desired. This time India is ready to defeat both the Tigers and the US in the Indian ocean."

"One Country, Two Governments"

Cabinet Minister S Thondaman, who is also the leader of Ceylon Workers Congress, has proposed the formation of two governments within a single Sri Lankan state, that will consist two different administrations similar to the arrangement between mainland China and Honkong where the Chinese accepted the concept of "One Country, Two Systems".

In an interview with "The **Hindu**" while in South India, Mr Thondaman said that in order to solve the prolonged ethnic crisis, Sri Lanka could adopt a two governmental system within a single country, similar to the system that is practised in Hongkong. China and Hongkong had agreed to recognise the existing system in Hongkong while maintaining the existing system in mainland China. A similar bi-constitutional system could also be adopted in Sri Lanka, to ensure friendly co-existence of Sinhala and Tamils in Sri Lanka. According to Mr Thondaman, the majority Sinhalese would have to recognise Tamils as the main ethnic group in the North and East provinces. He was of the opinion that obtaining "Ealam" through agreements wss not possible. If a proper attempt was made on this basis of his proposal to find solutions to the crisis, there might see a day where the aspirations of Tamils would be almost fulfilled. However, the only way this could be achieved was through discussions between the government and the LTTE after declaring a bi-lateral cease fire, he said.

Minister Thondaman has on many previous occasions publicly expressed his view that the LTTE should be allowed to administer and to be in charge of the North and East of the island for five years without elections.

A Referendum for the War ?

Former Air force chief Vice Marshal Harry Gunatilake stated during an exclusive interview with the Sinhala weekly "Ravaya" that, according to the current situation of the on going war and the strength of the LTTE, the present manpower of our Defence forces is pathetically inadequate for the govt to go for an all out win in the war. He also added that the govt should go for a Referendum to decide whether to continue the war under these conditions or not and it should be continued only of they get a mandate of more than 50%. According to him, the forces should have a minimum man power strength of 450,000 to wipe out the LTTE and any attempt to do so without the above will be a fruitless exercise that will claim many lives aimlessly. Under these circumstances, it will be much better to go for a settlement based on discussions, concluded Mr. Harry Gunatilake.

Tea Factory Attacked

A time bomb planted by a yet unidentified group at the Hatton Shanon Tea Estate belonging to Kotagala Plantations Ltd exploded recently resulting in considerable damage estimated at over Rs.100 million.

According to police sources, the Assistant Factory Manager of the tea factory was getting ready early in the morning to start the day when he heard some noise outside. When checking, he saw two persons cutting the wiremesh covering an office window and break-open it using a crowbar and when he shouted, other workers came rushing in. One of the suspects tried to shoot the Factory Manager, and as the workers of the estate came rushing in, he left the time bomb outside the office and ran away with his accomplice. Traces of blood along their escape route were found which indicated that at least one of them must have been injured when workers of the estate attacked them by throwing stones at them. Within a minute or two, the bomb exploded with a loud bang causing severe damage to the factory.

Police later claimed that five Tamil youth suspected of being involved in blowing up the tea factory were arrested by a special police team in Kandy and that their investigations have revealed that all five of them are hard core LTTE members resident in the Upcountry and that were also of the opinion that one of them was involved in blowing up the Oil tanks in Hatton.

Micro Pistols

A recent report quoting security sources said that one Tigeress (meaning a LTTE female cadre) out of two trying to skip through a check point at Ariyalai in Jaffna, pulled out a "Micro pistol" and shot dead a soldier the moment she was stopped for checking. She was shot dead by the other soldiers, while her colleague threw a hand grenade at the soldiers and managed to escape in spite of getting shot in the process. Defence sources say that this was the first

occasion in which Micro pistols have been used by the LTTE against soldiers Jaffna. "A Micro pistol is so tiny that it cannot be detected unless a comprehensive body search is carried out, and such searches particularly on women would create widespread resentment among the people particularly when such searches are carried out on innocent people," a security officer is quoted as saying.

Birthday Gift of "Baby Gun"

A mother of two and the wife of a missing person suspected of involved in many killings and having close connections with drug lords, was arrested by the Mirihana police for possessing 35 .22 calibre "Baby Bullets" which are said to be used in a Modern semi-automatic gun the size of a small cigarette lighter that can be effectively used for close range killing.

The husband of the arrested woman later surrendered to police with his father and the "baby gun" in question in order to get his wife released. During confessions this person, who is said to have a lot of connections with the kingpins of the under world, stated that an Army captain living in Maharagama came to his daughter's birthday party and gave him this gun as a gift.

Missing Policeman and Missing Bullets

The police recently arrested a man at Grandpass in Colombo named Naufer allegedly involved in several murders and a well known drug dealer. His interrogation is reported to have led to the arrest by the Peliyagoda police of a millionaire businessman from Kelaniya with known connections with the UNP, along with the official pistol and 18 bullets. The pistol has been identified as that belonging to former Senior Superintendent of Police Douglas Peiris who figured prominently in the Special Commission conducting the investigation into the assassination of political figures and who is fugitive from justice having gone into exile and reportedly living in Switzerland.

When the gun recovered from the millionaire businessmen was issued to Douglas Peiris, he was also given 50 bullets and the police are trying to find out as to what happened to the missing bullets.

District Quota System to be Abolished

Educationists in Sri Lanka state that, the decision taken by the government to abolish the existing district quota system for admission of students to university along with the implementation of the new educational reforms, will be very unfair, since the above quota system is the only machination available to offset the glaring inadequacies in the standard of education of rural areas. They also state that rural students studying rural schools with inadequate facilities will face more difficulties to gain admission to universities if this system is abolished proposed.

Galadhari Bombers Arrested

Security sources claimed that a special police team had captured 11 LTTE suspects from Kandy, including four who were allegedly responsible for the Galadhari bomb and many other attacks in Colombo and other places. These men were arrested at a car sale in Mahayawa, while trying to buy a lorry and were

CRYSTAL TRAVEL

offers
Special fares to Colombo during the month of July.
Return fare from £415!

35kg. baggage allowance. 1 year validity.
Call Raj or Palma on 0171-830 0600
We are open 7 days a week.

ATOL 3517

9 RATHBONE PLACE, LONDON W1P 1DE

IATA

placed in custody for three days when the Galadhari bomb went off. Soon afterwards Police further questioned them during which they reportedly confessed that they built a 250 kilo bomb at the "Tharawa" LTTE camp in Batticaloa which was taken to Kokkadicholai by a LTTE cadre called "Arul". It was later fixed in a lorry between the chassis and the patrol tank and brought to Colombo.

Export Earnings Grow

Sri Lanka's export earnings have recorded a 16.6 percent growth in the first three months of this year as against the same period last year, according to the country's Central Bank.

From January to March of this year, Sri Lanka's export earnings were 1,075.8 million U.S. dollars while earnings were 922.5 million dollars during the same period last year.

Industrial exports during this period this year accounted for 782.5 million dollars, out of which textiles and apparel brought in 549.8 million dollars.

The Central Bank said that the growth is reflected mostly in investment and intermediate goods.

Meanwhile, the Central Bank also reported that the rate of inflation as indicated by the Colombo Consumer Price Index was 8.9 percent.

Oil Tank Deal Upsets India

A proposal submitted by the Minister of Energy to lease out nine oil tanks situated within the China bay of Trincomalee harbour to a Singapore company with American connections, ignoring a proposition made by the Indian Petroleum Corporation as far back as 1995 to commence a joint venture there, has caused a lot of concern for the Indian government, the Sinhala weekly journal "Ravaya" has reported.

India considers Trincomalee harbour as a strategic location in the Indian ocean and a similar effort made by former President J.R. Jayawardena in the 1980s to lease out these tanks to another Singapore company with US connections, seriously damaged Indo-Lanka relations at that time. This also led to a situation where a special clause was included in the Indo-Lanka accord which bound the Sri Lankan government not to use the Trincomalee oil tanks for any project that would threaten Indian security. Nevertheless the above Cabinet paper forwarded by the Energy Minister recommends leasing these tanks to a Singapore company that will yield an annual income of Rs. 16.9 million, but so far no tenders have been called for it.

The Indian government will very soon demand the Sri Lankan government to act according to the conditions in the Indo-Lanka accord, the journal adds.

Indian Teachers for Estate Schools

The Education Ministry is planning to bring in teachers from South India to fill up 3,100 vacancies for teachers in 833 Estate schools. Discussions in this regard between Minister Thondaman and Education Minister Richard Pathirana have been held already and though India has agreed help to fill all these vacancies, the Education Ministry is finding it difficult to find them proper accommodation. There are 6070 teachers serving in these schools at present, but the requirement is well over 9,200.

Meanwhile it is reported that the State Minister of Estate Housing and leader of up country People's Front Mr P Chandrasekaran is totally against the idea to bring Maths and Science teachers from India to fill in vacancies in Estate schools, as in his view there are so many educated Tamil youth in the estate and other areas without jobs, who can easily be given these jobs.

The Poor Back the UNP

A discreet survey conducted by International Research Foundation in Sri Lanka with the assistance of a German Non Governmental Organisation, has revealed that most of the educated and professional people in Sri Lanka are supporting the People's Alliance government, while the majority of the poor and low income groups support the UNP, which has been traditionally identified as the party of the rich. For this survey they made use of 2,000 families from six districts. The data gathered by them also revealed that only 50% of total Sri Lankan population has any faith in the performance of government ministers and their administration process.

LTTE Hideout Discovered

The recent discovery by a special police team of a suspected LTTE hideout in Kandy has provided further proof that the Tigers have penetrated far and wide outside the northeast of the island, according police sources. According to them, the hideout was located in the thick jungles of Bowelawatte in Kandy from which they recovered 1,526 rounds of live ammunition, several suicide kits and 600 high powered bullets used for the suicide kits. They believe that the hideout was a fairly major camp of the LTTE and that there was evidence of both men and women cadres having lived here. Several black belts used for the suicide kits and an 18 inch pipe used to fix bombs were also discovered there.

$45 M in Gulf War Compensation

The United Nations will soon disburse around $45 million to Sri Lanka in compensation for losses suffered by its citizens during Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in 1990-91. "It has been agreed to release to Sri Lanka $45.387 million for the fourth instalment from the United Nations," Vijitha Nakkavita, spokesman for the Labour Ministry told the press.

Sri Lanka received $15.9 million in March last year, another $48.9 million in October and $32.82 million this April to be distributed to claimants judged by the U.N.'s Gulf War reparation body to have suffered from the Iraqi occupation. The funds have come from Iraqi oil sales approved under a special "oil-for-food" deal that went into effect in December 1996.

Around 85,000 Sri Lankans have been approved by the U.N. reparations body as eligible for compensation.

At Give Away Prices

"Give Horton Planes for a Play ground and Sinharaja Forest to a Timber Factory. Convert Dunhinda Water hall in to a Hydropower project and lease Adam's Peak to a tourist Hotel. Can get a good price for Dalada Temple and Sigiriya can be sold for Graphite."

These lines are not from an advertisement of the Public Enterprises Reform Commission, but are lyrics from a song by Nanda Malini, the popular Sinhala female singer.

The War in the Wanni and the Politics of Censorship

D B S Jeyaraj

Recent events in the Wanni theatre of war have not been to the liking of the Peoples Alliance government particularly Power and Irrigation minister Anuruddha Ratwatte who as Deputy minister for defence is in overall charge of the war effort.Alarmed by the resistance offered by the LTTE and reversals suffered by the armed forces at tiger hands, Ratwatte looking around for a scapegoat found one. The fourth estate the favourite whipping boy of all politicians at times of distress and disaster became Ratwatte's target too. On 5 June, Anuruddha succeeded in convincing President Chandrika Kumaratunga to impose a comprehensive censorship on the publication of military and war related matters at noon on the same day.

Unlike in the past where the local media was censored but not the foreign media this occasion saw no differentiation. Both the national and international media were subject to censorship as far as disseminating information regarding defence matters were concerned. This in effect meant that no news about the on going war could be published, broadcast or telecast without obtaining prior clearance from the government appointed censor. Thus it was a case of darkness at noon for the national and international media from 5 June onwards.

The current censorship was path breaking from another perspective too. The practice in the past has been that of appointing a senior civilian government official as the competent authority in charge censoring the media. Officials such as the ministerial secretary in charge of media and information, the defence secretary or national security ministry secretary etc. have been usually the people so appointed. These officials in turn delegated responsibilities to subordinates but retained full responsibility for the censorship. But in this case the government departed from tradition and appointed a military official, a full fledged general at that, to be the censor. Major General Jaliya Nammuni was appointed as the competent authority in charge of censorship. For the first time a military censorship on matters military had been imposed. A traditional function of civilian officials had been done away with. A prominent Sri Lankan English Weekly raised doubts as to whether this development was a precursor to a military government.

Military Reverses and the Media

The rationale for the censorship according to the government was to prevent the enemy in this case the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) knowing about military matters and defence developments through the media. Apparently the Tigers seemed to have anticipated possible forward movements by the army in the Wanni and had effectively prepared themselves for it. The quality of resilience provided by the LTTE had inflicted great damage on the troops resulting in loss of morale. The government assessment was that the Tigers were acquiring information from the media both local and foreign and countering the advances of the military successfully.Also utilising this media specific knowledge the LTTE was inflicting great great damage on the armed forces the government felt.

That Anuruddha Ratwatte was veering around to a mindset that blamed the media for military reversals became clear whenever the minister addressed media representatives including editors and foreign correspondents. Some months ago the authorities had publicised the comments of a so called LTTE aide captured in the Wanni. This man claimed that he used to translate news reports and articles in the local media into Tamil for LTTE perusal. The LTTE according to this man gained a lot of knowledge of military manouevres from these reports and made counter plans. The reports of Iqbal Athas in the "Sunday Times" were of special value, it was said. Although this "revelatory exhibition" was a concoction aimed at undermining Iqbal Aththas, it nevertheless indicated the defence establishment's point of view.

Anuruddha Ratwatte also went public in Parliament and blamed a newspaper for publishing a map and outlining plans of a future military operation in he Wanni. This had alerted the LTTE who had adequately prepared themselves. This attitude by the media was helping the enemy. The armed forces were being killed and injured and the military was getting bogged down. The entire military project was being scuttled by the media. As such a censorship was inevitable until the military operation was concluded successfully said Ratwatte.

And so the censorship was promulgated. None of the cabinet ministers knew about it until after it came into effect. A decision of such magnitude was taken by the President in concurrence with Minister Ratwatte despite the avowed commitment to transparency. The newly appointed military censor general Nammuni too was not informed personally first. After his name was announced media organisations began inquiring about sending copy to him. This flustered the General who did not have a facsimile machine at office. A fax and other paraphernalia necessary for a censor were obtained hastily and by 7 June evening Nammuni was in business.

The Cutting Edge

Like the proverbial new broom that sweeps clean the new censor too went through media copy like a knife through butter. Wielding the censoring nstrument like a weapon of destruction the General mutilated news reports ubmitted to him with military precision. Fully cognizant of his responsibility as the literal and metaphorical cutting edge of government olicy Jaliya had a jolly time chopping away. So good was he that newspapers during the ensuing weekend were looking like war ravaged terri-

tory. Chunks and chunks of space were blank with the description censored on them. So great was Nammuni's zeal that he even hacked statements made by President Kumaratunga at a public meeting. The controversial journalist Iqbal Aththas was a major casualty with just two insipid paragraphs from his lengthy article being spared the censorial guillotine.

Even though the government blamed the media for the military reversals and justified the imposition of the censorship on those grounds that rationale was not acceptable. In simple terms it is an argument that does not wash. It is quite puerile.

Even though the government blamed the media for the military reversals and ustified the imposition of censorship on those grounds that rationale is ot acceptable. In simple terms it is an argument that does not wash. It is uite puerile if not infantile for Ratwatte to suggest that the LTTE is betting its military information from the media alone. In the first place the logistical probability of getting information from the media alone is hard to accept. Also the time factor involved in such a case too is somewhat complicated. Could it be said that the Tigers are waiting patiently for the publication or telecast of news and then hurriedly mobilise and jump into battle? Hardly!

Ever since the government spoke about a land route through the Wanni it was a foregone conclusion that a major military operation in the Wanni was inevitable. There was some doubt in the earlier days about whether Ratwatte will opt for the Medawachiya-Mannar-Pooneryn route or the Vavuniya-Kilinochchi route. But once "Jayasikuru" was launched last year it became very obvious as to what the nature and course of the war was going to be. Moreover the "iguana grip" mentality of Ratwatte was also a well known factor. So when he had embarked upon a particular course of action the chances of his varying his goal were very unlikely. As time progressed and the LTTE displayed amazing resilience, the determination of Ratwatte to capture the A9 Vavuniya-Jaffna highway only increased. He kept on pressurising the army to pursue this solitary objective single mindedly without entertaining any other alternative options. Thus very little was left to the imagination or speculation about the aims of the army.

Under these circumstances the LTTE would have had no problem about predicting army movements. The Tigers knew the terrain very well. They also knew that the options for the army within the ambit of this particular theatre of war were very limited. As such they have been and are in a position to anticipate the possible forward manouevres of the army and prepare their defensive and offensive operations eaccordingly. The plus point on the LTTE side is the very high degree of motivation by the cadres who are pre-ordained to die for their cause. Also the Tigers have now in their possession a formidable arsenal of long range artillery. Besides, the military hierarchy of the Tigers are amply endowed with tactical foresight and strategic planning. Their intelligence gathering capacity is phenomenal. Thus it is no surprise that the LTTE has been able to frustrate the military efforts of Ratwatte for so long.

The Real Reason for Censorship

So it would be fair to conclude that the pretext for censorship namely the excuse that the LTTE is getting information from the media is not believed by any one even perhaps Ratwatte. If so, what then is the reason for the censorship? The cause lies elsewhere. What Kumaratunga and Ratwatte seem worried about is the impact of such military reversals upon the Sinhala constituency rather than the unbelievable reason of the Tigers getting military information. Such knowledge is likely to affect the recruitment pattern of the military and also damage morale of troops in action. Also Ratwatte's personal stock with the Sinhala masses is likely to go down. The man who thinks of himself as a latter day incarnation of Sapumal Kumaraya also said to have hopes of becoming Prime Minister. Apart from this the government also has another important reason for controlling the information received by the Sinhala people. This is for political advantage.

As discussed in the "Tamil Times" columns last month the Kumaratunga government faces a political impasse in promulgating the devolution proposals. One option being considered by her now is the staging of the Presidential elections after November this year. The constitution provides for an early Presidential election if and after the incumbent completes four years in office. Although Kumaratunga can go on for two more years, she and some of her advisers think that resorting to an earlier election will pay dividends.

Firstly it is felt that Kumaratunga has greater charisma and vote gathering capacity than her counterpart in the UNP Ranil Wickremasinghe. Although party support may be more equally divided the personality factor favours Chandrika more, it is said. Secondly it is better to go in for early elections now instead of delaying as issues like the cost of living etc. are likely to increase the unpopularity of the government in the future. Thirdly it would be possible for the PA to gain more seats in a parliamentary election following a successful Presidential election. So the PA hopes to win the Presidential election first and then follow it up with a Parliament election. Through this method it hopes to secure a two-thirds majority with the aid of supportive smaller parties and push through the devolution package in the teeth of UNP antipathy or apathy.

In order to test the political waters about the feasibility of holding early Presidential elections the PA hopes to utilise the forthcoming Provincial council elections to the Sinhala majority Southern Provinces in August this year. If the PA does well then it would go ahead with confidence into the Presidential stakes. In spite of being criticised on several fronts the PA hopes to win in elections by playing up the military card. The government hopes to project the capture and consolidastion of the A9 stretch between Vavuniya and Kilinochchi as a major politico-military victory to the Sinhala voter. As such a time bound factor has now crept into military calculations. The Provincial council elections can be postponed for another six months if necessary. Therefore the "Jayasikuru" operation has to succeed within this period. There is also another possibility that Provincial elections in the South could be held while the "Jayasikuru" war continues in the north.

The Battle in the Wanni

Whatever the possible political scenario a primary consideration then

from a propaganda perspective is the need to control information flow about the battlefront news. In spite of Ratwatte's fervour the situation on the ground has only been adverse. Apart from resisting the army, the LTTE in the process has inflicted considerable damage and losses upon the army. What the government is worried about is the negative impact it would have on Sinhala voters and by extension on the political fortunes of the PA. It is this factor therefore that has compelled the PA to impose censorship. The purpose is to suppress the truth about the reality on the battlefront to the domestic voter constituency in the Sinhala south. The charge that the LTTE is getting information from the media is only a red herring. Recent developments accelerated the government thinking on the matter.

The on going operation Jayasikuru proceeding in fits and starts recommenced on May 28th this year. This time the government and military hierarchy seemed determined to succeed in this particular phase of the operation. According to some reports astrologers had calculated the date and time for recommencement. Ratwatte himself visited the battlefront on the eve of operations and pepped up the officers and men. An unconfirmed report states that some Buddhis priests too had visited the front and chanted pirith.

Four military divisions namely the 53rd, 54th, 55th and 56th are stationed in the Wanni. Of these the 54th is at Kilinochchi district. This particular phase of Jayasikuru being optimistically viewed as the final one envisaged the 54th breaking out from Kilinochchi and engaging in a southwards thrust to complement the northward manouevres by the 53rd 55th and 56th divisions. At the time of recommencement troops had consolidated themselves on the north-west at Moondrumurippu and at Olumadhu-Karippattamurippu on the north-eastern sector. Another detachment had also skirted around Mankulam and positioned itself on Ambakamam along the old Kandy road that runs parallel to the present Kandy road. This old Kandy road goes via Mudaliyakulam and Kokkavil to Iranaimadhu. There it forks off into two with one going to Kilinochhi and the other to Vattakkachi on the Paranthan-Puthukudiyiruppu road. Thus it seemed clear that the army intended making majorthrusts on these strategic routes to achieve their ultimate objective. The immediate objective of course was the long elusive Mankulam proving to be "so far in spite of being so near".

Troops broke out from Moondrumurippu and tried to capture Vannivilankulam road junction which would have enabled them to take Thunukkai and Mallavi two vital towns in the hands of the LTTE. Soldiers also proceeded in two directions from Olumadhu and Ambakamam. The Olumadhu troops were aiming for Mankulam and the Ambakamam troops towards Iranaimadhu. All these attempts including a foray from Kilinochi were thwarted by the Tigers at considerable loss to the army. So sure the army was of victory that news reports appeared that the army had captured Thunukkai even before the soldiers had reached Vannivilankulam road.

The army stepped up their campaign on Tuesday 2nd of June on the same lines as mentioned before and were repulsed by the LTTE. On the 3rd Wednesday troops from Olumadhu-Karippattaimurippu in a tactical manouevre proceeded north eastwards and then made a sharp turn and proceeded north westwards. The Tigers were waiting. The column was penetrated by the LTTE in two places thereby fragmenting the troops into three segments. The LTTE then mowed down the isolated soldiers in great numbers. That episode resulted in over 150 being killed and nearly thousand wounded.

The following Thursday 4th June saw troops from Kilinochi striking out. One column moved along the Paranthan road through Murasumottai and reached Vattakkachchi. Another column proceeded in two formations through Karadippokku and Thirunagar towards Kilinochchi South. The LTTE let them advance for a while and then encircled them subjecting them to a barrage of mortar fire.

As troops scattered and ran landmines took their tool. A corresponding counter attack on Vattakkachi based troops saw them too retreating. This Kilinochi fighting also saw more than 140 soldiers being killed and nearly a thousand being injured.

These two major debacles in successive days saw Ratwatte panic. He feared the impact of these on the country at large. Hence his hurried visit and desperate plea to the President and consequent censorship. Military operations in the following weeks too saw the LTTE registering significant successes. The position as of 14th June 1998 according to reliable sources was that the armed forces had incurred losses of nearly 600 dead and four thousand five hundred injured. Of the wounded about two thousand are classified as walking wounded while about 2500 are admitted in hospitals all over the South. The LTTE suffered around 175 dead including senior Commander Lt.Col Anbu. The figures about their injured are not known, but it could be several hundreds.

The imposition of the censorship has resulted in two things. In the first place it has not been possible for the government to check uncensored news from reaching the Sinhala people. The LTTE establishment overseas has been faxing their press releases to news agency offices abroad. These in turn have been publishing these news items from non-Sri Lankan datelines like New Delhi and Singapore. Thus no legal provision is being flouted. These news items in turn are being picked up on the internet by Sri Lankans. Nowadays news about the war are being faxed around merrily in Colombo. The authorities cannot arrest them all. But of course this medium of communication is available only to the established and aspiring elites. The sight of speeding ambulances with screaming sirens is another medium through which ordinary people come to conclusions of their own about the military "progress".

But as far as the orddinanary citizen is concerned that great mass production industry of rumour factories are working overtime again. Ironically the censorship is helping to reinforce these rumours. Let's take a hypothetical example. Say a newspaper sends a news story saying "100 Soldiers killed at 10 am on Friday at Kilinochchi". The censor in his wisdom would remove "100 soldiers" "10 am" and "Kilinochi". The newspaper concerned would then publish a censored version that would read something like this: ... (censored) .... killed at..(censored) ... on Friday at ..(censored). This would result in the reader coming to the conclusion that some

major incident resulting in killings had occurred on Friday. In a matter of no time this "skeleton" of a news would have gaind flesh and blood. Soon the rumours would have it that hundreds of soldiers were killed in this place and that place on Friday. So the people would now get the impression that hundreds of soldiers are being killed all over whereas if the censorship had not been imposed the fact that 100 were killed at Kilinochchi would have been clearer. The simple logic of the ordinary citizen would be something like this: If Tigers were killed then the government would trumpet it aloud. Secondly if the government was winning the war then there is no need for censorship. Therefore the government is not winning the war and all those being killed are soldiers.

Thus it can be seen that the purpose of censorship itself is proving to be counter-productive. The censorship internationally leaves the field open to the LTTE whose press releases will be given virtually monopolistic publicity in the absence of credible news from other sources. Nationally the bad news about the war front is likely to be circulated by word of mouth in a haphazard manner. Army losses are likely to be exaggerated in these spreading rumours. Moreover the government agreement withthe BBC where its telecasts and broadcasts are reproduced in Sri Lanka are further embarrassments. Since the agreement explicitly prevents local censoring these newscasts and broadcasts relay information about Sri Lankan developments, gleaned from sources abroad to Sri Lankan viewers and listeners.

If this trend continues the government objective of controlling and conditioning Sinhala public opinion about the course of war would not be achieved. Instead there is every chance that a cynical public is likely to lap up the partial information padded up with rumours being made available every day. An impression that the war is being lost will gain ground. Even if the military were to truly achieve a victory in a major battle with the LTTE and the information about such victory is allowed to be published by the censor, the readers are more likely to disbelieve it. Using the tool of censorship for political advantage, therefore, would be a self-defeating exercise. ●

Is there a Place for Prophets of Peace?

Oswald B. Firth OMI
Director, Centre for Society and Religion

Mahinda, the Messenger of Peace

We have often prided ourselves on the claim that our cultural heritage is so imbued with profound religious values that it has hardly ever been tainted with criminalities associated with barbarians. The Poson Poya is a poignant reminder to all who engage in war and violence that these are but cowardly instruments of goal pursuit when compared with the overwhelming and enduring presence of inner peace and harmony with the entire eco-system. Devanampiyatissa learned these vital lessons of life at the feet of Arahat Mahinda, the missionary of peace and compassion, who enticed the mind of a wayward king and led him through the path of non-violence. That cultural heritage has diminished to the level of a flicker in a lamp fast running out of oil.

Caring for the resources of the earth is a sacred trust that has been entrusted to humankind. But that sacred trust has now being breached and violated, and human beings stand condemned at the brink of a new century for being the great exterminator of lifeEs vital supports and resources. Perhaps, the world is in need of a new Arahat Mahinda to halt the process of self destruction we are inflicting on ourselves and on our future generations.

Our hopes for a better and brighter future for our siblings and ourselves were sought for in our numerous religious festivities and in an amalgamation of religious practices and precepts which, we believed, would form the substratum of our life and lead us into the next century. However, cultural heritage and spiritual legacies notwithstanding, the cruel barbarian, the uncompromising terrorist, the feudal imperialist and the crude capitalist continue to hold sway in our midst, making a mockery of the sacred traditions and religious precepts that have guided civilizations such as ours through time-bound ages and timeless aeons.

Sarojini: The Plight of the Prophet

A striking example of what has been said above is to be found in the tragic event that snuffed out the life of Sarojini Yogeswaran, an uncompromising standard bearer for a brave new world of peace and harmony. Sarojini, an unarmed woman, who sought to thwart the culture of violence by refusing even the presence of a security guard to ensure her protection, is gunned down in cold blood. Having suffered the demise of her dear husband, and that too in a most violent manner, she could have decided to retire into political oblivion and spend the rest of her life either at home or abroad in considerable comfort. But all this was shunned as a result of her courage and determination to bring peace to her beleaguered people. The diabolical gun is never a respecter of saints, sages or innocent sucklings. But it stands out as a beastly symbol of a civilization that has lost its religious ethos and its sense of direction.

The critical question that needs to be posed is not who killed Sarojini Yogeswaran, but why she was gunned down at all! What indeed has brought this country, whose boast "par excellence" are her principles of compassion and non-violence, to cross the threshold of tolerance and engage in ribald ridicule and vile vilification of those who take their stand for the cause of peace and the defense of human rights? Messengers of peace today are being increasingly accused of conniving with the "enemy" whoever that may happen to be; they are portrayed as "traitors to the nationalist cause" which is none other

than canonizing the religion and language of the majority or those of a myopic minority.

To the diehards and obstinate who eschew dialogue as an instrument of conflict resolution and take up arms in defense of their rights, whether they be of the majority or are a segment of the minorities, agents of peace are often perceived as stumbling blocks and delayed devises that obstruct the "people's revolution". They refuse to come to terms with reality and accept that the era of despotic "Pol Pots" have little place in contemporary society. If these messengers of peace happen to cite, by way of example, initiatives for peace in Palestine, or in Northern Ireland, or even in the Philippines, in the name of future generations, they are labelled and hounded as agents in collusion with foreign powers working for their own personal interests. Such is the crippled minds of those who from time to time pontificate in the press while living on the crumbs that fall from their foreign master's tables.

Appeals for cease-fires, peace zones and corridors of peace in consideration of suffering civilians and for the transportation of humanitarian assistance across the firing lines are perceived as providing time for the enemy to re-group and refurbish his depleting stocks of arms. The slightest sign of the peace maker attempting to promote a dialogue between the warring factions are bound to generate caustic remarks of one who is "perched on the horn and picking the ear". A request for third party mediation evokes sardonic reactions and sarcastic innuendoes of attempting to inject a deadly virus into the country's internal affairs, as if the country had not already been infested with foreign transnational corporations that are devouring both our human and natural resources.

Reclaiming Humanity's Heritage

The scurrilous propaganda against the prophets of peace is perhaps a sad indication that in the process of liberalizing the economy and selling our precious resources to pay off our debts, we have also bartered away our perennial virtues that guarded and guided the well-being of our people. This is perhaps what Francis Fukuyama was saying in his "The End of History" (1989), when he stated that mankind had reached the final point in history, since Western Capitalism had become the ultimate form of human government. In this form of government, the violence of mercantilist trade, war, genocide and colonialism are presented to a world inebriated with consumerism as universal progress, development, modernization and freedom. If this were true, then the time has come for the prophets of peace to reclaim for humanity the cultural values hidden beneath the encrustations of religious rituals and those pietistic forms of religiosity that call for a total isolation from the real world.

The task of the prophet of peace is to restore to its place of pristine importance the value of life and all that sustains it. Life is the supreme value. Other values such as peace, justice, honesty and solidarity take their cue from the respect a given society expressly manifests towards life. The greatest advocates of peace and human rights in our century: Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Aung San Suki, to name just a few, and Sar-

TRUST TRAVEL

205 Wardour Street, London W1V 3FA

— Amazing fares from the trusted travel agent in London —

Here are some of our special offers .....

Return fares to **Madras** during July 98 **£405** plus airport tax
(Outbound to commence before 14 July) – Daily flights from Heathrow Terminal 3

Return fare to **Melbourne** via Singapore. (Outbound to commence between 29 March to 30 June)
£475 plus airport tax – Daily flights from Heathrow Terminal 3

Return fares to **Kuala Lumpur £395** plus airport tax

Special fares to Colombo in July

and many more special fares on schedule airlines to:

USA, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST, INDIA, EUROPE

For further information and seats availability please call us on:

0171 287 3200

IATA 91245770

We are bonded by Civil Aviation Authority for your financial security
ATOL No: 4234 IATA No: 91245770

EMERGENCY PHONE SERVICE ONLY FOR IMMEDIATE TRAVEL 0961 192 464

TRUST TRAVEL ..... TRUST TRAVEL ..... TRUST TRAVEL ..... TRUST TRAVEL

ojini Yogeswaran, Charles Abeyesekera and Rajini Thiranagama, the renowned author of the "Broken Palmyrah", from this little "paradise" of ours, were all firm believers and charismatic champions of peace. For them peace created the atmosphere needed for life to grow and blossom forth. The example of their committed lives and their reverberating voices must find a place in the hearts and minds of our future generations.

Responding to the Plea of the People

It was not long ago that the nation chalked up fifty years of independence from colonial domination while being enmeshed in a war for which the blame has to be placed squarely on the shoulders of the leaders of the two major political parties that have ruled this country since independence. All attempts by one party to lay the blame on the other side or on certain violent elements in the North smacks of a Lady Macbeth engaged in a futile exercise of cleaning off the blood from her stained hands. After all, the resort to arms in the North is a result of bigotry in the South where pacts and conventions were broken faster than they were made, let alone implemented.

The ceaseless and harmful rivalry between the two major parties in the South has not been on matters of principles or for service to the people of this country. Each of these parties has opposed when out of power what it has proposed when in power. In an Urgent Appeal addressed to the heads of the two major political parties in the South, the Centre for Society and Religion has joined an unequivocal chorus of voices stating that the political rivalry that has persisted between these two parties from their very origins, and continues even to this day in the form of vituperative verbal battles both in and out of Parliament, "has impeded a solution of the (ethnic) issue in 1956, 1958, the 1960s, 1972, 1977 and 1987 and upto now". This has led to a worsening of the situation and violence since 1956, and to the ongoing 15 year civil war.

Undoubtedly, the statement insists, that "the failure of the two main political parties to come to an agreement on this issue is a principal cause of our continuing civil war costing over 50,000 lives, and rendering about a million persons refugees in Sri Lanka and in exiles abroad". The devastation of the economy, spending a third of the country's budget on a war the people refuse to own, the indebtedness of the country and tortuous distrust, animosity and the cult of violence among the people, are but sad consequences of this failure on the part of our political leaders to resolve this menacing crisis honourably and with justice and dignity to all concerned.

As much as peace is the guarantor of life, it would also be correct to say that the real bedrock of peace is justice. It will not be anything more than the peace of the graveyard unless justice assures people's inalienable rights and sense of security to all citizens, whatever be their ethnic origin. No single political party can ensure all this without working in tandem with the other major parties and agreeing to share with all parties the credit of a possible breakthrough and an eventual solution to this agonizing problem. Our cultural and religions values have the potential to inspire all parties to a peace-dialogue and point the way to a more just and humane solution to this burning issue. We cannot allow the children of this land to carry this burden created by our chequered past into the next century.

Unless and until this becomes a reality, will there be a place for prophets of peace in keeping with the sublime message of peace that was brought to this country two thousand years ago by Arahat Mahinda? ●

LESSONS FROM ANOTHER KILLING FIELDS

Jehan Perera

Since the military censorship imposed by the government can lead to chunks of an article being devoured, it is best to use this period to reflect on matters that are more distant from the north-east theatre of operations. A look at Cambodia which is a fairly close neigbour to Sri Lanka, and shares with it a common religion, shy and gentle people, and also problems of conflict, might be opportune at this time.

According to residents of Phnom Penh, its capital, there is an entire street which is inhabited by Tamils of Sri Lankan origin. Cambodia has become yet another trans shipment point for LTTE arms dealers. This war battered country does not still have a strong framework of law and order. The first sign of this problem can be seen at the international airport in Phnom Penh. Foreigners are routinely asked for money to permit them to enter and to leave the country.

The fact that these transactions happen relatively openly is a sign of the tenuous hold that law and order has over the country. It seems that problems have to be solved at the level at which they arise, with little opportunity for appeals to higher authority. This would make Cambodia a haven for the illegal arms trade. But Cambodia also has relevance to Sri Lankans for another reason.

Opponents of the LTTE have drawn parallels between it and the Khmer Rouge, though perhaps the more appropriate comparison would be with the JVP which was also a social revolutionary movement that resorted to violence. The LTTE, by contrast, is primarily an ethnic-based movement. Today, the Khmer Rouge is confined to the remote extremities of the country and has split into several factions. The former leader Pol Pot who headed the Cambodian government between 1975-79, during which time the country became internationally notorious for its killing fields, died a few months ago.

But despite its international pariah status, the Khmer Rouge had a tenacity to survive in Cambodia. It has taken nearly twenty years after being dislodged from power by the Vietnamese army for the Khmer Rouge to lose its ability to seriously threaten the Cambodian polity. This contrasts with the LTTE. With the departure of the Indian peacekeeping force in 1989 which had confined the LTTE to the

jungles, the LTTE emerged as a stronger force.

Abortive Negotiations

In the first few months of last year, the Khmer Rouge lost what may have been its last chance to be a major force in Cambodian politics. A section of the Cambodian government led by Prince Ranariddh tried to engage the Khmer Rouge in negotiations. By getting the Khmer Rouge on his side, the Prince thought that it would strengthen his hand against his co-prime minister Hun Sen. The arrangement to have two prime ministers was a compromise power sharing arrangement arrived at after the 1993 UN supervised elections.

Recently, some internal documents of the Khmer Rouge fell into the hands of the Cambodian army (cited in the Phnom Penh Post, May 22-June 4, 1998). These documents clearly show that the Khmer Rouge did not believe that Prince Ranariddh was sincere in his negotiations, and they did not intend to be sincere either. The events that transpired during the attempt to negotiate are a reminder of how difficult it is to stage successful negotiations to solve long drawn out problems between armed parties that distrust each other acutely.

"Ranariddh needs us, we also need him," are the words written in the minutes of one of the meetings of the top leadership of the Khmer Rouge. "Ranariddh's boat is sinking in the sea, but our boat is not. We have to help him, but the way we help is to offer him a stick - not a hand, not an embrace, not to let him cling to our boat, or we shall all die. We have to play a trick. Ranariddh wants to use us as a water buffalo to get across the mud, but we have to ride the buffalo."

Meanwhile the Khmer Rouge planned a way to regain power using Princen Ranariddh. He had agreed to give local level control to the Khmer Rouge, while his faction of the government would assert control at the provincial level. The Khmer Rouge planned to use this opportunity to spread throughout the country, taking over the villages, communes and districts. The Khmer Rouge documents show that its plan was to join with Prince Ranariddh for tactical reasons, only to strengthen itself, and to take Cambodia back to the era when it was led by the "poor peasant farmer."

But the whole plan came unstuck for both sides, due to an internal power struggle that broke out within the Khmer Rouge. Unfortunately for the Prince's negotiators, they landed their helicopter in the middle of this power struggle. The Khmer Rouge faction that got first to the helicopter were those who opposed the negotiations. The ten government negotiators including a provincial deputy governor who headed the delegation, were killed. Only the five airforce personnel on board the helicopter were spared. The pilots said that the government team was met by Khmer Rouge officials who ordered them to shut their engine at gunpoint. Soon after they heard gun shots. None of the ten government negotiators were ever seen alive again.

The closest Sri Lankan parallel to this terrible "negotiation" would be President Premadasa's abortive effort to talk peace with the LTTE in the period 1988-89. Here too, the main purpose of the talks was tactical - to forge an alliance that would rid the country of the Indian army which was present under the terms of the Indo-Lanka Accord. Both sides sought to make use of each other, not to reach a final settlement, but to deal with a common enemy. Such tactical alliances are prone to betrayal.

Indeed, a fate similar to the ten Cambodian negotiators almost befell Minister Hameed when he flew to Jaffna in June 1990 to negotiate with the LTTE a few days after the outbreak of the renewed fighting. His helicopter was shot at and only barely made it back to Colombo. There was no change of heart on the part of the two sides regarding each other.

Ingratitude

Strangely enough, there is a certain unwillingness on the part of many Cambodians to squarely place the blame on the Khmer Rouge for the atrocities of the past. This may be due to the fact that the Khmer Rouge's governance in Cambodia would not have been possible without the acquiescence of substantial sectors of Cambodian society.

The Cambodians have two foreign countries to blame for their tragic past. The first, obviously enough, would be the United States. It was the US that dropped 7 million tons of bombs in Cambodia in the course of the Vietnam war. The Vietnamese in their war against the US-installed regime in the south, were using the territory of neighbouring Cambodia to supply themselves from China. The US mercilessly bombed this so-called "Ho Chi Minh trail" paving the way for the destruction of Cambodia's economic, social and human infrastructure.

Ironically, today, the antagonism of the Cambodians is much more directed towards their Vietnamese neighbours than towards the Americans. The two peoples have rivalries that go back centuries. In 1979, the Vietnamese army invaded Cambodia and overthrew the Khmer Rouge government. They set up a new Cambodian government, but one that was dependent on the Vietnamese army for its survival.

During the four year Khmer Rouge period of rule nearly two million people are believed to have died, most in the forced migration of people from the cities to the villages. The middle and educated classes were decimated in the "class cleansing" that took place. Even today, the lack of an educated class of people is noticeable in the country.

However, Cambodians show little gratitude towards the Vietnamese for having rid them of the Khmer Rouge. Instead they blame the Vietnamese for the abuses that took place for the next fourteen years while the Vietnamese army remained in Cambodia. They do not attribute any good motives to the Vietnamese for having sent their army into Cambodia. The parallel to Sri Lanka, where the Sri Lankan government has sent in an army of Sinhalese soldiers to liberate the Tamil people from the LTTE can be seen.

When an outside army rids a people of an oppressive internal ruling group, the people may initially be content with the new situation. But unless a viable process of genuine democratic rule is put into place the initial positive feelings are likely to change to animosity. Despite having held local government elections in January this year, at which there was a substantial voter turnout, a similar drift can be seen in Jaffna today, for which the government seems to have no answer except a military censorship.●

The Hindu and Islamic Bombs?

T N Gopalan

The inevitable has happened. Pakistan too has conducted its nuclear tests. The ruling elite of that country are crowing, and the ignorant masses are dancing in the streets, celebrating the attainment of the "nuclear parity" with the Hindu India. Neither those burning the Indian national flag on the streets of Islamabad nor the Sangh Parivaar distributing sweets in India seem to be aware of the enormity of the tests, the serious implications that they have for the future of the sub-continent. Already Emergency has been declared in Pakistan and fundamental rights have been suspended. And there are dire predictions that in the wake of the sanctions to be imposed by the West, the Pak economy would collapse.

The BJP puts on a brave face vis a vis the swift Pak retaliation and asserts that its assessment of the nuclear capability of the hostile neighbour stands vindicated. "Only it has come out of the wraps." It also seeks to derive some satisfaction from the doubts persisting about some aspects of the Pak tests.

Altogether Pakistan claims to have conducted six tests in a span of three days, on 28 and 30 May but technical details are not available, leading to suspicions of fudging by the Pak scientists.

For its part India had tested a 45 kilotonnes hydrogen bomb, a 15 kilotonne fission bomb and another "low-yield device" on 11 May and two sub-kilotonne devices on 13 May.

Predictably, Defence Minister, George Fernandes boasted that the Pak's tests "nowhere near those of India's" and that "they conducted only one test on 28 May. And they did not go in for the crucial low-intensity sub-kiloton tests.

When quizzed on the doubts cast by sources in the USA on the veracity of the Pak claims, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, the father of the Pak bomb, retorted, blithely, that it was for the White House to sort out the issue with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Only there have been hints that the much-touted Ghauri missiles would now be nuclear-capped.

Dr Khan also contested the validity of the Indian claims that it had tested a thermonuclear device, an euphemism for the Hydrogen bomb. Incidentally the claims and counter-claims apart, anyone of the devices tested could surely be much more devastating than those dropped on Hiroshima or Nagasaki in 1945.

When asked what the tests meant for the country, Prime Minister Vajpayee boasted, "Millions of Indians have viewed this occasion as the beginning of the rise of a strong and self-confident India. I fully share this assessment and this dream. The greatest meaning of the tests is that they have given India shakti, they have given India strength, they have given India self-confidence."

But then as Mr Mani Shankar Alyar, once an aide to the late Rajiv Gandhi and who has been lobbying hard for a better relationship with Pakistan, put it, "It was when we were much weaker economically, politically and militarily that our voice was heard loudest. Remember Gandhi? India under that peacenik Nehru had a far higher status than Vajpayee's India will ever have."

Immediately after the Indian tests, the hawks in India, meaning most columnists and defence analysts, started computing the cost of going nuclear and put it somewhere around Rs. 20,000 crore, though spread over a few years. Surely the defence budget would be jacked up by at least 15 per cent annually. The first budget of the BJP-coalition saw a sharp hike in the allocation for the defence sector, from around 36,099 crore to Rs.41,200 crore. Plus the department of atomic energy gets Rs. 1,569 crore (against Rs. 1264 crore last year) and space research Rs. 1381 crore (against only Rs. 990 crore). The international television channels like the BBC and the CNN kept harping on this hike to defence and related sectors. However the fact remains that the share of defence spending as a share of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) remains virtually unchanged at 2.54 per cent and that is a matter of some solace.

One analyst even went to the extent of noting rather smugly, "no expensive new arms race has begun... Money is not being diverted from butter to guns, or from ghee to nukes."

Apparently he does not seem to include the allocations for the related sectors - it is the atomic energy department which has played a crucial role in the serial tests and the space research programme includes the development of strategic cryogenic engines - in his calculations, and one should bear in mind Finance Minister Yeshwant Sinha's promise that he would consider a further budgetary increase in the course of the year.

Still that even under such a revanchist, atavist and militarist party like the BJP, the government has its limitations in seeming to be development oriented. That is the brighter side of the situation in India, such is the strength of democracy which has taken rather deep roots in this country. Even the barrage of anti-Pak statements issued by Advani and others have to be suitably camouflaged in order to make it acceptable for the middle classes. Certainly no Pakistani national flag was burned down during the demonstrations.

But there is no need for such squeamishness over there. It has been a hate-campaign throughout and it has only become more virulent after the Indian tests. And there is no dissent, nobody in the media seems to wonder the sense, the sanity of it all. After the 1974 Pokhran-I explosion Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto vowed to eat grass but one day make the Islamic bomb. Going by what has happened since the bomb has materialised, none of the Bhutto clan has lived on much more than on mere grass - those who had to do so were the large masses.

Similar refrains are heard these days in Islamabad and elsewhere. But who will pay for the folly this time? Pakistan's foreign debt stands at $36 billion or 72 per cent of its GDP. India's, though much higher at $91 billion, constitutes hardly 25 per cent of its GDP. There is a very real threat that the international aid it receives - in the form of soft loans and grants -

up to $3.5 billion might be choked up following the western sanctions.

Besides the Pak rupee is fully convertible and any run on it could endanger its foreign exchange reserves totalling $1.3 billion. The Emergency was proclaimed mainly to prevent a major financial crisis and freeze the foreign currency accounts.

At least the Pak establishment is being realistic about the patriotism of the expatriates. That apart, how long that country could hope to live on the edge without toppling over is anybody's guess.

Will a cash-strapped Pak churn out the deadly bomb by the dozens and hawk around the Islamic world any one of which could, in a moment of desperation, hurl it at the West? Such visions are already haunting the West.

Even as we go to press comes the report that Pak is all set to test-fire its medium-range Shaheen-I missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads up to 700 km land and that it is working on long-range Shaheen-II which can travel up to 2,000 km. "Production of this guided missile is being carried out and it can be fired by the latest solid fuel technology carrying a nuclear warhead to the desired target," declared Dr Samar Mubarik Mund, Director General of the National Development Complex who headed the team of scientists at the test site in a newspaper interview.

It looks like that each wing of the Pak science establishment is competing with the other to claim that it has come out with more sophisticated toys than the rest and is clamouring for more and more allocations. And unlike India the scientific community does not mind swearing to sock the Hindu neighbour in the eye. Suddenly the national agenda seems to have been highjacked by the zealots and warmongers.

It may be noted here that just a week before the Indian tests that the notorious hawk Gohar Ayub Khan seemed to have been sidelined. He had almost put in his papers. He himself tacitly admitted in a newspaper interview that his constant fulmi-nations against India had become acceptable to the rest of the government.(He is incidentally the son of the first dictator of Pakistan, Marshan Ayub Khan who had stepped up the offensive against India. Like father, like son.)

That characters like Gohar should have become somewhat marginalised was in itself some good tidings.In fact the testing of the Ghouri missile and the high-profile visit of some members of Sharif's cabinet to the sprawling headquarters of a fanatical fundamentalist outfit which openly claims to train mercenaries to fight for the liberation of Kashmir only went to show the complete dominance of the hawks. If they still viewed with some apprehension Gohar's brinkmanship, it only went to show that things were taking a turn for the better.

But the clock has been set back yet again thanks to the muscle- flexing by the BJP. In a puerile display of macho, Home Minister Advani had declared after the Indian tests that Pakistan should realise the changed geo-strategic situation in the subcontinent and behave accordingly. And he was at a loss for words after the Pak tests.

Advani had also declared that besides, India would become pro-active on the Kashmir front, darkly hinting that the Indian forces would chase militants across the border, right into the areas under the control of Paki-

(continued on next page)

CARLTON LEISURE

"Worldwide Travel Agent"

ATOL 74568

"Fly with us once- fly with us always"

MAIN AGENT FOR ROYAL JORDANIAN

CALL US NOW

WE ARE BONDED BY CIVIL AVIATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF ALL OUR VALUABLE CLIENTS

COLOMBO SPECIAL £298

MADRAS SPECIAL £393

TORONTO SPECIAL £229

UNBEATABLE FARES AVAILABLE TO ALL OTHER WORLDWIDE DESTINATIONS

QUOTATIONS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST FOR HOTEL BOOKINGS AND TRAVEL INSURANCE

CALL: HARRY VAHEESAN (VAGI) or BINIE RAMACHANDRAN

0171-434 2233

E-mail -info@carltonleisure.com

(EMERGENCY LINE: 0831 541200, FAX: 0171-287 1577)

SUITE 212 PREMIER HOUSE, 77 OXFORD STREET, LONDON W1R 1RB

The Troubles of Nuclear Adventurism

Ramesh Gopalakrishnan

The G-8 meeting held in London this month ensured that India and Pakistan both agree for some kind of talks to prevent the emerging danger of an arms race in the subcontinent. That Japan, the victim of the nuclear bombs, took the lead in pushing the demand for talks made it impossible for India to reject the need for talks even while mouthing the now-infamous rebuff that "There can be no nuclear apartheid" and the silly remark that "You can't order us to talk when you've not dismantled your own nuclear weapons". The G-8 countries have made it sure that all developmental assistance to both India and Pakistan would be postponed once again. And the two countries seem to have realised that it is more prudent to go in for talks, bilateral or otherwise, lest they be given the unofficial status of rogue-states.

Now, the two governments are quibbling over the venue, date and the level of talks. Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Nawaz Shariff are expected to meet at Colombo during the SAARC summit in July, and hence, the first level of talks would have to be secrtarial. The Sri Lankan and Bangla Desh governments seem to be keen that the secretarial level talks take place so that the impending meeting between the two leaders goes off without any hitch at Colombo. This indicates that the so-called bilateral negotiations India has been aiming for have already been multilateralised, to the extent of other countries in the region, as well as Japan, playing some kind of sensitive role to get the two countries to the talking table.

Events during the month which followed the Pokhran tests show that India has registered losses in both diplomatic and domestic fronts. In the domestic level, the tests produced an initial sense of euphoria with a mass jingostic hysteria propelled by the media, but this swiftly drained off in the unusual summer heat before the south-west monsoon, and later, the earthquake which rocked Afghanistan and the cyclone which ravaged coastal Gujarat. All the three natural events took their toll of lives and the Vedantic Indian was left wondering whether the Brahman was punishing the hapless people of the subcontinent for the follies committed by its seats of power in Delhi, Islamabad and Kabul.

The nuclear adventures of Delhi and Islamabad, no doubt, has the jingositic support of masses of people, but some of the thinking lot in India certainly got somewhat nervy over the lurking future. This was evident from the quiet but emotionally-charged dissent provided by some scientists, intellectuals and some left spokesmen. Even the Congress, which went to the extent of supporting the tests, suddenly saw the point and started questioning the need for them. Indian industrialists saw both business possibilities and dangers in the massive hike of 13 per cent in the defence allocations in the annual central budget. The most-telling establishment criticism came from the seasoned diplomat in the person of former prime minister I K Gujral, who saw that all Indo-Pakistan disputes, including the vexed Kashmir dispute, would no longer remain bilateral and are going to be dealt in the international fora henceforth.

The BJP-led government, in the meantime, spoke in three voices. First was that of defence minister George Fernandes, who pushed the argument against China to the maximum possible extent. On his agenda were China's big nuclear arsenal, placement of missiles in Chinese-occupied Tibet, China's decision to claim and occupy areas in the Himalayas, the impasse in the Sino-Indian border dispute talks, China's move to befriend the much-hated Myanmar gerdarme regime and its setting up a surveillance station at Cocoa Islands near Andamans in the Bay of Bengal. Fernandes also talked of nuclear weaponisation of armed forces, which means fitting the missles with nuclear warheads and guarding them for eternity. He was supported by his scientific advisor Dr A P J Abdul Kalam and department of atomic energy chief Dr R Chidambaram, who claimed that the tests have vacated the nuclear threats to India from its neighbours. Obviously, the euphoria made them exceed their briefs while addressing, at Delhi, the international media which was left wondering whether it was listening to speeches made by evil science fiction geniuses like Dr Strangelove and Dr Mabuse!

The next voice was that of the committed hardliner L K Advani who advocated the harsh Kashmir line to the end of its tether. As home minister, he took charge of Jammu and Kashmir affairs, and before that, spelt out that the Pakistani-aided armed fundamentalists would be severely dealt with by the Indian armed forces.

(Continued from page 22)

stan, raising visions of an imminent Indian invasion.

A crafty Gohar upped the ante further by claiming that India was planning to air-strike the Pak nuclear facilities and promising a fitting response. And this time no one sought to restrain him. As one of the few dissenters in Pakistan jibed at the muscle-flexing and said "On such occasions the brain does not work."

A Pak senator gloated after the Indian tests, "The picture has become clearer now. It is a Hindu India ranged against an Islamic Pakistan. The assumption of office by the BJP and the tests have unmasked the liberals. Secularism exists only in their imagination. Now we can fight it out in the open."

There cannot be a more resounding admonition of all the so-called Hindu ethos and its tolerance and catholicity. The attacks on the visiting Pak dignitaries in Bombay and on Christians and on institutions managed by them in the neighbouring Gujarat - both under BJP dispensations - only go to point to a disturbing pattern.

In the circumstances the nuclear testing and the overwhelming endorsement it has received reinforce the fascist undertones. Is a Fuehrer lurking in the corner or Karl Leibiknechts will we defy history and stop him in his tracks? ●

This by no means was new, but Advani's sudden decision to talk of going in for "hot pursuit" of Pakistani-aided terrorists into Pakistani-occupied Kashmir raised serious alarms. This was the decisive phase of war talk by the Indian government. Advani's hardline was reciprocated by Pakistan whose generals fortified their bunkers. Pakistani chief of staff Jehangir Karamat visited the frontline posts, just as Fernandes was visiting Siachin and other places. Suddenly, Kashmir was back to its 1949 position of becoming a direct battle zone for the two armies! Advani's harsh talk was supplemented by the RSS-VHP euphoria over the development of a Hindu Bomb as a fitting response to the Islamic Bomb of Pakistan, the VHP even deciding to construct a Shakti temple at a village near Pokhran.

The third voice was that Vajpayee himself, who argued that the bomB was a purely swadesh security effort. This line was advanced a little late by the prime minister and, by then, the damage had been done. Vajpayee went on to address the parliament and international media several times to push the argument that the bomb was not against anyone. He decided to send two missions to the Western capitals. The first mission was undertaken by Brajesh Mishra, former diplomat and the BJP's external affairs cell convenor and the next, by Jaswant Singh, who is the deputy chairman of Planning Commission. The two blue-eyed boys went to the West to push the swadeshi line, but found very little takers. Brajesh Mishra met Jacques Chirac, Robin Cook and Yevgeny Primakhov, and Jaswant Singh went to the United States to meet Clinton's deputies and Strobe Talbott. It was clear that Vajpayee's strategy was to isolate France and Russia, which had been the least critical of India's tests, in favour of India's position on Kashmir, but this didn't pay off. Ultimately, the two missions failed in getting the G-8 countries to revoke the sanctions contemplated on India. Interestingly, Vajpayee did not send any emissary to Japan which had been the first country to implement the sanctions. On the other hand, the G-8 countries got some of its allies in Europe and Latin America to endorse their critique of India and Pakistan. This meant that India stood to lose friends like Italy, Argentina and Canada in the long run.

To a large extent, Vajpayee has to blame himself and his ministers Advani and Fernandes for all the gaffes since the Pokhran tests. First, Vajpayee did very little against the Hindu bomb theory being propagated by his friends in the RSS and the VHP. Second, the United States leaked a letter written by Vajpayee to the Western leaders, immediately after the tests, in which he had categorically stated that the Pokhran tests were necessary to get rid of the existing nuclear threats from China and Pakistan. He could not explain how a nuclear bomb could protect a country from a potential attack by another! Rather, he chose to sidestep the whole delicate ethical issue. These moves ripped Vajpayee's much-touted mask of being a soft-spoken moderate among a bunch of hardliners in the BJP. Next, Vajpayee had announced from rooftops that there was a consensus on conducting the tests. The consensus fell away after minimal protests from various quarters took place in India. And lastly, Vajpayee went on to claim that, the May 28 and 31 Chagai tests conducted by Pakistan, had vindicated the Indian government's decision to conduct the Pokhran tests. This was a spurious argument at its best, since, but for the Pokhran tests, Nawas Shariff would not have come under pressure from his jingoistic constituencies to conduct the Chagai tests. The fact was that Vajpayee's folly has compounded Shariff's. Period.

From now on, all Indo-Pak disputes will have the unwitting status of being held under international surveillance and scrutiny. The Indian government would be allowed to claim a bilateral status for the talks, but in reality, the talks would have an internationally-set agenda, be it on Kashmir, control of weaponisation through hotlines with access to Western capitals, negotiations on the terms provided in the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), safeguards in nuclear plants against diversion of nuclear materials for making bombs, and lastly, the punitive threat of sanctions and economic isolation. Neither India nor Pakistan can ever hope to exist in economic isolation, and hence, would have to talk to each other, in an atmosphere of distrust and hatred, under international scrutiny if not direct mediation. It was George Santayana who said those who failed to learn from history are condemned to repeat it. It is now the turn of the governments of India and Pakistan to do so in the subcontinent. And it is India which is in deep trouble since it is one country which had taken a totally different trajectory, at least in some of the above issues, during the last 50 years. The vexed dispute of Kashmir, thus, seems heading for a future under a new framework. ●

Shipping & Air Freight
PERMA INTERNATIONAL
HOUSEHOLD & COMMERCIAL SPECIALISTS
FAMILY BUSINESS PROVIDING A PERSONAL SERVICE
• COMPLETE DOCUMENTATION SERVICE
• IMMEDIATE INSURANCE COVER
• IMPORT & EXPORT
• AIR, SEA & LAND
• WORLDWIDE DESTINATIONS
• ALL SIZES & WEIGHTS
• PACKING & CRATING SERVICE
• COLLECTION & DELIVERY
ESTABLISHED 1966
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
TEL: 0181-208 2431/4510
FAX 0181-208 1882
15 BURNLEY ROAD NW10

DMK LEADER KARUNANIDHI, BATTLING TO SURVIVE AT 75

T N Gopalan

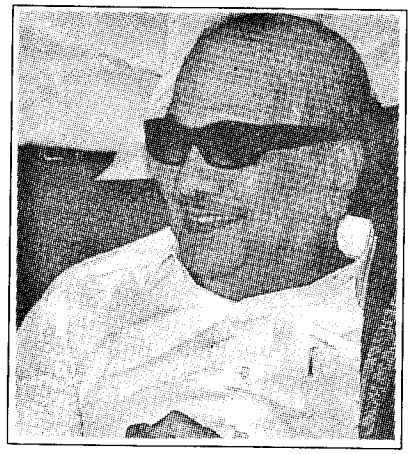
What guarantees success in political survival instinct or unrelenting pursuit of whatever objectives one sets for oneself? Muthuvel Karunanidhi who turned 75 on 3 June, does not seem to have any doubts.

The man who has managed to come back to power in Tamil Nadu time and again, weathering many a political storm, finding common cause with a variety of persons and forces right across the spectrum, without the slightest of qualms whatsoever, is now precariously perched on the throne, agonising all the time whether his bitter political rival Jayalalitha would be able to pull it off - these days he spends his time inventing ever newer ways of placating the BJP in the most obsequious and shameless fashion.

But for many of his enthusiastic supporters, the septuagenarian leader represents the very summit of the Dravidian movement. Politics being the art of possibility, one should not blame him for things he has failed to deliver. Whatever the case, he is the best bet against the likes of Jayalalitha, and so one had better stick to him if one is serious about preserving the hard-won gains of the Dravidian movement pioneered by Penyar EVR, so goes the argument.

He himself declared in a recent interview, "The Dravidian movement can never be defeated, it might have suffered a jolt here, a set-back there ...but ultimately it triumphs.

His political baptism had taken place way back in 1938 when he, as a 14 year-old boy, took part in the anti-Hindi agitation. Since then he has been part and parcel of the Tamil Nadu political scene in varying degrees. And so his history is virtually identical with that of the Tamil society. In the words of one of his effusive loyalists. His 75th birthday could indeed be the right occasion for a review of his chequered career which might



have a message to convey to the entire Tamil community. At this very moment he was chest-thumping on the invincibility of the Dravidian movement, though not explaining what the movement meant for him, he was looking plaintively to the Sangh Parivaar - who represents the very antithesis of the core of the Dravidian principles - to bale him out of the crisis created by Jayalalitha since her surprise victory in the Lok Sabha polls a couple of months ago. Speaking in the Assembly Karunanidhi had declared rather touchingly, "I'm prepared to sacrifice my office if only it would enable Mr Vajpayee to survive in power. I'll indeed be gratified at being able to do a good turn to a dear, esteemed long-term friend of mine...". His effusions had made even his associates squirm a bit.

(Significantly he always takes care to train his plaudits towards the PM only and does not mention Home Minister Advani even by mistake. The secret of course is that Advani is said to be ranged against him, even plugging for his dismissal whereas Vajpayee is presumed to have firmly set his face against any constitutionally indefensible act.)

Addressing a mammoth public meeting organised on the sands of the marina to mark his 75th birthday, he defended himself saying that he had made such an offer only to draw out the ever taciturn PM. "I know how to protect our state's interests," he added. That Vajpayee did not respond only went to show that there was no case against his government, he implied.

Right through his 45-minute speech at the meeting, he did not utter a word against the dangers posed by communalism and glossed over the fall-out of the nuclear tests. He only waxed eloquent on the DMK's commitment to federalism and its principled stand against the invoking of Art 356 of the constitution to dismiss a duly elected state government.

(It was the self-same Karunanidhi who had lobbied hard with Mrs Gandhi in 1980 to get the MGR regime dismissed in the wake of the AIADMK's defeat in the Lok Sabha elections that year at the hands of the DMK-Cong-I alliance.)

A couple of other points in his birthday declaration are also worth noting. Reacting to a Dalit leader's outrage over the untouchability problem, he counselled the other to be patient, wanted his government's attention to be drawn first whenever there is any specific manifestation before any agitation is embarked upon. And thus in a state wherein conflicts between the Dalits and the intermediate castes keep cropping up time and again, and sometimes in a most virulent fashion.

He also expressed his concern over the security of the nation and vowed that his party would be second to none in strengthening the unity of India, more so when others threaten to invade it.

Neither for Dalits nor for Muslims was there any word of solace. He was not speaking to the people of Tamil Nadu as much as to the ruling BJP after all. It should be noted here that only the previous week his regime had enacted a draconian legislation, the Anti-Terrorism Bill, conferring enormous powers on the police and widely interpreted as targeting the Muslims more than anybody else.

If the horrendous Coimbatore blasts of March last led to a serious rupture of the special relationship between the Muslims and the DMK, what with a shattered Karunanidhi constrained to go all out against them in order to nab the culprits, everyone of Karunanidhi's moves subse-

16TH ANNIVERSARY MASSIVE CLEARANCE SALE

The First & Best Tamil Silk House in London

VISIT US NOW FOR LATEST PURE KANCHIPURAM SILK SAREES

WIDE RANGE OF STOCKS ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Pure Satin Koorai, Stain Guard Benares, Mysore Silk, Kashmir Silk, Various Types of Silk & Cotton Sarees.

Salwar kamiz Lengha Choli, Pattu Pavadai, Pattu Vesty, Denim Trousers, Shirts, Party Dresses etc.

VERY LUCKY SHOP FOR MUHURTHAP PUDAVAI

WE ARE AT YOUR SERVICE SEVEN DAYS A WEEK

6 Kumars Silk House

A TREASURE HOUSE FULL OF BEAUTIFUL DREAMS

285 HIGH STREET NORTH, EASTHAM, LONDON E12 6SL

TEL: 0181-471 5742, FAX: 0181-471 6005

16th Anniversary Sale at Cost Price

6 Kumars SUPER MARKET

Quality Customer Service Since 1982

Jaffna Red Rice Flour	1 Kg.	79p
Jaffna Roasted Curry Powder	1 Kg.	£ 2.99
Jaffna Parboiled Rice	1 Kg.	99p
Jaffna Lime Pickle	Bot.	£ 1.29
Tholakaddi Nelli Crush	Bot.	£ 1.99
Best Slice King Fish	1 Kg.	£ 3.49
Best Cleaned Blue Leg Crab	1 Kg.	£ 3.99
Best Baby Shark & Seer Fish	1 Kg.	£ 2.99

Always Sri Lankan Fresh Vegetables Available At Very Low Prices

Those shopping for £25 receive 5 FREE RECORDED Audio cassettes

Nationl/ Sanyo Rice Cookers £6 off from the marked price.
Stainless Steel up to 20% off. Pre recorded Audio from 50p. CD from £2.95

Customer Satisfaction is our Happiness

6 Kumars MINI SUPER MARKET

287 A HIGH STREET NORTH, EASTHAM, LONDON E12 6SL

TEL: 0181-471 6005, 0181-471 5742

OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK

quently too have been aimed to prove his credentials as a patriotic citizen, determined not only to uphold the rule of law but also stamp out terrorism with an iron hand - problems involved in such an approach are obvious.

But then Karunanidhi's entire political career could be summed up in one word, survival at any cost, and survive in order to buttress his own and his clan's position. Those who repeatedly talk of his contribution to the Dravidian movement generally gloss over when it comes to specifics.

Anti-Brahminism was certainly at the core of the movement and in fact its raisond'terre at one stage. To this day Karunanidhi does make some anti-Brahmin noises, even if sotto voce, and his followers are happy. But if demolishing the Brahmin hegemony was the sole objective of the movement, by now all its offshoots have no business to exist. Brahmins as a community have been systematically marginalised and it is next to impossible that they would ever regain their position of importance, DMK or not.

The DMK's founder C N Annadurai had claimed that the main enemy was Brahminism and not Brahmins as such. But if by Brahminism one means caste hierarchy, exclusivism, snobbery plus parasitism, every tier of the non-Brahmin society is hopelessly infected by that disease and no one least of all Karunanidhi has made any attempt to stem the rot.

Karunanidhi as Chief Minister in 1990 solemnly regretted that the Dravidian movement had lost its way and should be put back on the rails and the DMK conference at Trichy was christened the Thiruppumunai Maanaadu (Turning Point Convention). Immediately thereafter the Dravidar Kazhagam set about attacking defenceless Brahmins, cutting their sacred thread and so on. Karunanidhi cried foul and called off his campaign. That was the last anyone heard of anti-Brahminism from the DMK platforms.

Besides the fact remains that the intermediate non-Brahmin castes which have benefited by the rise of the Dravidian movement like the Thevars, Naickers and the Vanniars have baulked at the rise of the Dalits - it only goes to show the limitations of the movement and how serious Karunanidhi has been about his egalitarian crusade.

If the Dalit votes do not matter, ditch them. If the Muslim votes don't, ignore them. If the Brahmin media count, court them. If the Brahmin-Bania axis at the Centre could make all the difference between his being a CM and an ordinary citizen, pay obeisance to it. At the end of the day what matters is whether his clan flourishes or not, whether the SUN TV and the array of their other business interests are safeguarded or not. Plus also that he remains at the helm of affairs in the DMK till his death and hopefully passes on the baton to his son Stalin.

His track-record on the Lankan Tamil issue is a case in point. He could shed tears over the fate of Sri Saba Rathnam but hail Velupillai Prabhakaran as a hero. He would denounce the IPKF and also avoid completely mentioning the issue during the 1989 election campaign following an understanding with the CPM. He could give mild encouragement to the Tigers but drop the matter like scalding hot potatoes after his dismissal and the Rajiv assassination - he could do the most contradictory things and justify the twists and turns in the most eloquent language possible. More than on any other issue, on this front, he has proved himself an opportunist par excellence.

For all the noise made by the Dravidian faithfuls, the movement cannot be and is not taken seriously beyond a point. Whether it suffers from some congenital disorder or not - how else will one explain the MGR-Jaya phenomenon or the almost total ideological bankruptcy of the cadres of all the so-called Dravidian parties - Karunanidhi's own role in the degeneration of the movement cannot be underestimated.

Those including this correspondent who had been reviling Jayalalitha for allowing the BJP a toe-hold in Tamil Nadu are aghast at the way Karunanidhi is cosying up to it and rumours are flying thick and fast that he is willing to join hands with it at an opportune moment if only the BJP could sever its links with the AIADMK. If and when such a turn of event comes about, that would be the nadir of the none too edifying career of Karunanidhi.

But his followers do have a point. The likes of Jaya are monstrosities never to be encouraged and one man who could stop her re-emergence is Karunanidhi. Besides he does provide the polity, a reasonably decent administration and he also does get chastened over a period of time. In the circumstances one cannot but wish him a long life and the Tamil society some better luck in the days to come. ●

This is Not Justice

Recently legal circles, including judges, in Sri Lanka were shocked when it was learnt that a particular UNP Member of Parliament, who is facing charges in the Colombo High court, met the High Court Judge hearing his case at the Blue Oceanic Hotel in Negombo, in the company of a Magistrate who is going to contest the coming PC polls on the UNP ticket. The Magistrate concerned has taken the UNP politician to meet the Judge himself in an apparent effort to influence the Judge in favour of the accused MP.

Many of Sri Lanka's judges are furious with the action of this particular Judge for bringing the judiciary into disrepute and contempt in the eyes of the public, and they have made representations to the Chief Justice take appropriate action.

Going to Dogs

The chief editor of the Sinhala journal "Kinihira" is appealing to all Buddhists in Sri Lanka "to launch an accelerated program to save the very place lord Buddha was born." Why is this sudden concern ?

"Stray Dogs Reign in Buddha's Birth Place on Wesak Day" is the tilte of the story published in this journal (17 May) which states; "Our chief editor was at Lumbini in India, where Lord Buddha was born, on his birthday the Wesak poya day. While every Buddhist in this world whether rich or poor light a lamp to commemorate this great day, the very place this revered person was born, was in darkness and dogs were seen running about fearlessly."

What about Sri Lanka to which Lord Buddha is said to have paid three visits? As the saying goes, it is also going to dogs, or rather to the dogs of war.

"Living Through Jaffna's Sultry Sunset"

STANDING UP FOR RIGHTS

Review by Marwaan Macan-Markar

Rajan Hoole can be a difficult conversationist, for his delivery is a calculated, slow, deliberate affair. There are pregnant pauses regularly. And at times, as you wait, you can almost imagine the movement of a word slowly making its way from his brain to his tongue. Nevertheless they are words laced with sincerity; what he has to say stings in its directness. His forte is as a fearless, outspoken critic of those who abuse human rights.

It is this same outspokenness that one encounters in the pages of the reports he has become known for - the literature of the University Teachers for Human Rights (Jaffna). The voice of Hoole does ring when reading through those disturbing narratives. While he may counter threat, saying that there are others involved in these regular chronicles, like his fellow mathematician, Dr K Sritharan, the sting of Hoole cannot be ignored. Here is what I mean "How is one to defend a cause that offers the people only death and destruction without any remedy? What kind of liberation is it where people are time and again left injured by the actions of their liberators, are forced to go the so-called genocidal enemy for medical care, and also get shot as traitors for making contact with them?

It was in 1988 that Hoole and Sritharan, along with doctors, Daya Somasunderam and Rajani Thiranagama came together to pursue a mission they believed in write an account of the events that had strangled Tamil society in the north. "The Broken Palmyra" was the result. And Brian Seneviratne is correct when he states in the book's foreword that no person or group was spared, nor information suppressed out of fear. In it, the militant groups, the Indian army and the Sri Lankan forces had charges pressed against them. It documents, as Seneviratne says, "What we have all known, but not had the courage to say - that the civilian population has been cannon fodder in a despicable power struggle."

Today it is 10 years since that seminal effort. And there appears to be little to rejoice. The world they wrote about still remains in shackles. There are wider and deeper scars. The war is still a permanent fixture. And to mark the occasion, the UTHR (J) has brought out "Living Through Jaffna's Sultry Sunset", a book that in its style is consistent with what the authors chose for "The Broken Palmyra" and subsequent reports: that diary-like manner, suggestive of immediacy, the need to state accurately, briefly, often in the form of anecdotes, what they have learnt.

For those who have turned to their previous works to learn about the disturbing state of the human condition in the north and east, this book does not disappoint. Its pages contain the same commitment to state the facts as they are, to call a killer a killer, to call a fraud a fraud.

If one were looking for a heroine in this book, then it has to be Rajani Thiranagama, who was murdered on 21 September 1989. What she saw in the Tigers is clearly stated. It reads "The Tigers' history, their theoretical vacuum, lack of political creativity, intolerance and fanatical dedication will be the ultimate cause of their own break up. The legendary Tigers will go to their demise with their legends smeared with the blood and tears of victims of their own misdoings. A new Tiger will not emerge from their ashes. Only by breaking with this whole history and its dominant ideology, can a new liberating outlook be born." And that the Tigers killed her for this is an event the UTHR(J) will never let them forget. They use it as the clearest example to convey the state of 'internal terror' that had struck at the heart of the Tamil community. A condemnation of the 'home grown totalitarian ethos.'

But there were others, too who had crossed the path of the Tigers and were felled. And this book tells the tale. You read about Thamalingam, a bookseller, who was shot five times in his home one night. There was the murder of Saro, a 35-year old vegetable vendor, a widow, who had come to Jaffna as a refugee some years ago. And then there was the manner in which the Tigers dealt with Krishnan, a bachelor. He was killed soon after he had finished worshipping at a local Hindukovil. The message in all these anecdotes is clear, the Tigers are politically bankrupt.

In highlighting such incidents, the UTHR(J) finds itself on a far more honourable plateau than some of the other human rights organisations that have sprouted in the last 20 years. The latter conveniently avoid exposing the Tigers for abusing Tamils by taking refuge in such specious arguments as only the state can be held accountable for violating people's

rights. You may not see in their work the name of Kannan, for instance, a 33-year old father of five who was shot by the Tigers in January 1997 for having given some sweet rice to soldiers on Thai Pongal day. Nor, for that matter, will you read the poem Kannan;s outraged brother penned and had published in a memorial announcement in the Uthayen. The mouth must remain shut, except for the purpose of eating. That is the law. Whom may we ask for justice, for your life that was taken? IT is the ruler! IT is the destroyer! Truth never sleeps, Someday, it will awake... But on this book, however, you will.

This does not mean, though that the Sri Lankan army, navy and the other arms of the defence establishment have been viewed as the lesser of two evils. In "Living Through Jaffna's Sultry Sunset", one comes across terrible accounts where uniformed men have been as villainous as the Tigers. The rape of Sinnapody Selvaranee, a 28-year old, has been described in painful detail. So, too, the number of young men taken into military custody and tortured. A boy in his teens, for instance, had been hung up by strings tied to his thumbs then made to inhale petrol fumes. Then pins were forced into his nails and he was given 'electric shock treatment'. And that, mind you, during the period when the military had launched its 'hearts and minds' operation in Jaffna.

In all its work, the UTHR(J) has stuck to this theme of identifying the two forms of terror that has traumatised the Tamil community: the external terror produced by agents of the state and the internal terror that flowed from the hands of the Tigers and other Tamil militant groups. This pattern has been followed in this book, too. Likewise that tendency to identify those players in this ethnic conflict who have become apologists of the Tigers. The National Peace Council may want to take note of this. And so some scholars, church groups, Colombo-based Tamil journalists and NGO's "Living Through Jaffna's Sultry Sunset" has pages indicting the lot for justifying a fascist, brutal organisation that functions sans accountability to the people it claims to represent.

For those who wonder who, then, will have to lead the Tamils to the promised land. Hoole and Sritharan have this answer: "The unenviable task of liberating the Tamils falls, thus, to the Tamils themselves. They have accomplished two things that are a pointer to much more that could be done. One is the mass return to Valikamam and the other is voting at the recent local elections. Both these were departures from the role marked out for them by the LTTE and the spokesmen foisted on them. The next step would be to open up discussion of crucial issues, and build up institutions from grassroots level to aid collective action and to uphold basic human values."

This book is a further affirmation of the vision the members of the UTHR(J) came up with during a sultry April a decade ago, when the first 10 copies of "The Broken Palmyra" was brought out in photocopy form. A vision to create a better society by exposing what is wrong. ●

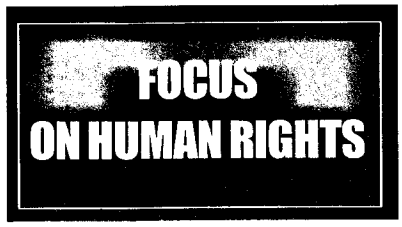
Call for End of Impunity for Torturers

Amnesty International, the London-based international human rights body, in a statement issued on 20 May welcomed the recommendation by the United Nation's (UN) Committee against Torture that the Sri Lankan Government take firmer action to bring to justice perpetrators of torture.

On the occasion of the examination of Sri Lanka's initial report under the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (the UN Convention), the UN Committee welcomed the role played by the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka in awarding compensation to victims of torture, but urged the authorities to bring to justice the perpetrators.

The Sri Lankan Government delegation acknowledged that torture was a problem in the country and that apart from one case against six police officers charged with the torture of one man in Embilipitiya in 1990, no prosecutions had been initiated.

The UN Committee also recommended that the government reviews the definition of torture in Sri Lanka's Convention against Torture Act 1994 to bring it fully in line with the definition in the Convention, and that it also initiates a review of the Emergency



Regulations and Prevention of Terrorism Act to ensure their compliance with the UN Convention against Torture. The Committee further recommended that the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka and other mechanisms be strengthened to ensure their impartiality and effectiveness.

In addition, the Committee urged the Sri Lankan Government to make a declaration under Articles 21 and 22 of the UN Convention. This would give private individuals in Sri Lanka the right to lodge complaints regarding violations of the UN Convention Against Torture with the Committee, and allow other states parties the right to declare that Sri Lanka is not fulfilling its obligations under the UN Convention.

The UN General Assembly has declared 26 June 1998 as International Day against Torture. Amnesty International urges the government to use this opportunity to officially recognize the suffering of the thousands of victims of torture in Sri Lanka, by issuing a clear condemnation, announcing measures to stop widespread torture and ill-treatment, and granting redress as recommended by the Committee.

Amnesty International called upon the government to commemorate all victims of torture on 26 June of each year - as suggested by one of the members of the Committee and as welcomed by the Sri Lankan delegation.

CLASSIFIED ADS

For 20 words £10. each word 60p charge for Box No. £3. (Vat 17 1/2% extra). Prepayment essential.
The Advertisement Manager,
Tamil Times Ltd., PO Box 121
Sutton, Surrey SM1 3TD
Phone: 0181-644 0972 FAX: 0181-241 4557

MATRIMONIAL

Jaffna Hindu parents *seek vegetarian bride for accountant son, 25. Send horoscope, details. M 1022 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu Parent *seeks suitable partner under 37 for engineer son living and employed abroad. Very independent and talented.M 1028 c/o Tamil Times.*

Seek suitable bride *for cousin in good employment, 30, permanent resident, owns property. All correspondence treated confidentially. M 1029 c/o Tamil Times.*

WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couples on their recent wedding.

Dr. Sai Shankar *son of Dr. and Mrs. Ramanathan of 92 Hitchings Way, Reigate, Surrey RH2 8ER and* **Dr. Shanthi** *daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Shanmugalingam of 10 Aykley Vale, Durham DH1 5WA on 23rd May 1998 at Kadwa Patidar Centre, Kenmore Avenue, Kenton, Middx., UK.*

Sugaljan *son of the late Mr. R. Somasundaram & Mrs. P. Somasundaram of 'Velta', Pandatharrippu, Jaffna and* **Karthiga** *daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Pathmanathan of 4 Sandyhill Road, Ilford, Essex IG1 2ET on 27th May 1998 at Walthamstow Assembly Hall, London E17.*

Nandan *son of Mr. & Mrs. Kandappa of 83/2, Anniewatte Road, Kandy, Sri Lanka and* **Shakila** *daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Sountharanayagam of 510-25 Silver Springs Blvd., Scarborough, Ontario M1V 1M9, Canada on 29th May 1998 at the Holiday Inn, Sir Mohamed Marcan Markar Mawatha, Colombo 3.*

Devapriya *son of Mr. & Mrs. S. Sivapathasundaram of 21 Dinsmore Road, Balham, London SW12 9PT and* **Dhamayanthi** *daughter of Dr. & Mrs. S. Nagarajah of 19 Kent Road, North Ryde, NSW 2113, Australia on 7th June 1998 at Thornleigh Community Centre, NSW 2120 Australia.*

OBITUARIES

Mrs. Wijayaluxmi Kanagasabai *(87), of 'Wijaya Giri', Sandilipay; beloved wife of the late Mr. A. Kanagasa-bai, Retired Town Overseer, Kalmunai; loving mother of C. Vijakesparan (London) and Mrs. Viyageswary Nadarajah (Colombo); mother-in-law of Neelambal Viyakesparan (London) and Mr. S.C. Nadarajah (Retired Assistant Auditor General, Colombo); grandmother of Ganasenthan - wife Loudhmila (Moscow), Senthakumaran (Norway), Nanthini - husband Uthayakumaran (Colombo), Jivitkumar - wife Roshanthi, Branavan - wife Ramanthi and Senthuran (London) and great grandmother of Aswiniy, Shalini, Raman and Manisha passed away peacefully on 31st May 1998 in Colombo and was cremated on 1st June.*

The members of her family wish to thank all friends and relatives who attended the funeral, sent messages of sympathy and assisted them in several ways during this period of great sorrow. - 787B Kenton Lane, Harrow, Middx., HA3 6AH, Tel: 0181 954 1640/ 45, 36th Lane, Colombo 6, Tel: 587631.16. Tel: 587631.

Mrs. Rose Jeevamalar Rasiah, *Retired Teacher, Pandaterrupu (Sri Lanka) Girls' High School; beloved wife of the late Shanmugam Rasiah; loving mother of Anton Thayaseelan (Engineer, Switzerland); sister of N.S. Ratnasingam (Australia), the late N.R. Balasingam and Rajamalar Blanchard (Canada), passed away on 26th May 1998. The funeral took place in Jaffna.*

The death occurred suddenly in Sydney, Australia on 31st May 1998 of **Dr. Nagalingam Sivasubramaniam;** *brother of Dr. Poobalasingam (London), Kaneshamoorthy (Hong Kong), Mahes (Sydney), Gnanes (Birmingham), Parames (Melbourne), Gnanambika (Sri Lanka); brother-in-law of Bawani, Gayathiri, late Mr. Sethukavalar, Dr. Suntharalingam, Cugathasan and Velautham.*

After working in the United Kingdom for 5 years, he went to Malaysia, where he was appointed Physician. He later emigrated to Australia in 1980 and was in General practice. He is survived by his wife and two children. He is also sadly missed by all his nieces, nephews and friends.

The funeral took place in Sydney on 3rd June 1998.

IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Kanagambihai Ragunathan *who passed away on 10th June 1993.*

Five years have passed
Your voice still echoes
In our home

Fondly remembered with love and affection for ever by husband Ragunathan (Ragu, formerly of Badulla; Sri Lanka), son Sri; daughter-in-law Saku and grandson Vishva. - 173 Mammoth Hall Trail, Scarborough, Ontario M1B 1P8, Canada.

In ever loving memory of **Mr. Sayambunather Vyramuttu Rattinam** *on the first anniversary of his passing away on 9th July 1997.*

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by his beloved wife Sellam; loving children Pathmanathan, Ramanathan and Loganathan; daughters-in-law Vahsuki, Vijeyaladchumy and Thanalechmi; grandchildren Vijayaluxmi, Thevakumar, Senthooran, Bhavana, Kugan, Ashavidthya and Sathian; and great grand daughter Krishni. - 3 The Orchard, Wickford, Essex SS12 0HB. Tel: 01268 766624.

IN MEMORIAM

Second Death Anniversary of

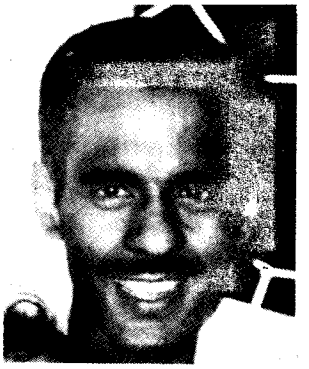
***Mr. S. Jeyasingham**, Advocate, Pt. Pedro who passed away on 3rd June 1996.*

I remember your smile that bit my heart,
I remember the cherished moments we shared
The little ways you showed me you cared.
I cherish them now more than ever before
As you aren't here to share them any more.

Remembered with love and affection by your dearest wife, daughters, sons-in-law, grand childen and loved ones.

Mrs. J.K. Jeyasingam.

Seventh Death Anniversary



22nd June 1998

In Ever Loving Memory
of

Balasubramaniam Sivagananathan

On the seventh anniversary of his passing away on 22.6.91.

Remembered with love and affection by his step mother Mrs. Rajaletchumy Balasubamaniam; wife Kamala, brothers Dr. Sivaloganathan, Thirunavukkarasu, Radhakrishnan and Srithran; sisters Mrs. Gowri Pathmanathan Mrs. Bhagawathy Mohanadas, Mrs. Mangayarkkarasi Jetheendran and Mrs. Jayanthi Kumaranayagam. - 22 Oakwood Drive, St. Albans, Herts. Tel: 01727 853331.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Jul 1 *Aani Uthiram; Feast of St. Oliver.*
Jul 2 *Feast of Our Lady of Madhu.*
Jul 4 *11.00am Sixth Annual Law-Medical Cricket Match at Millhill Park, Hammers Wise Lane, Millhill, London NW2. For details Tel: 0181 904 1789/0181 795 0648/0171 274 0100/01923 825235.*
Jul 4 *5.00pm Jaffna Hindu College O.B.A. (UK) Annual General Meeting followed by Cultural Evening at Richard Challoner School Hall, Manor Drive North, New Malden, Surrey KT3 5PE. Tel: 0181 204 5366/952 1147/907 6638.*
Jul 4 *7.45pm Bharata Nrityam by Dr. Padma Subramaniam at Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank. Tel: Box Office 0171 960 4242.*
Jul 5 *6.30pm Above at Beck Theatre, Grange Road, Hayes, Middx. Tel: 0181 561 8371.*
Jul 5 *Eekathasi.*
Jul 6 *Pirathosam; Feast of St. Maria Gorette.*
Jul 9 *Full Moon.*
Jul 11th *& 12th 9.30am to 9.30pm Saiva Conference on 'Saivism in the West' at Lewisham Theatre, Rushey Green, London SE6. Tel: 0181 690 0401.*
Jul 12 *Sankatakara Chathurthi.*
Jul 15 *Feast of St. Bonaventure.*
Jul 16 *Aadi Prappu; Feast of Our Lady of Carmel.*
Jul 18 *Karthigai.*
Jul 19 *Eekathasi.*
Jul 20 *Pirathosam.*
Jul 21 *Aadi Sevvai 1.*
Jul 22 *Aadi Amavasai; Feast of St. Mary Magdalene.*
Jul 27 *Aadi Pooram; Chathurthi.*
Jul 28 *Aadi Sevvai 2.*
Jul 29 *Sasdi; Feast of St. Martha.*
Aug 8 *6.30pm Chundikuli St. John's College 175th Anniversary Celebrations Cultural Evening at Winston Churchill Hall, Pymm Way, Ruislip, Middx. Tel: 0181 952 9914/904 1789/882 2333/ 01895 257788.*

AUSTRALIAN NEWSLETTER

A Tamil Information Session *was organised on 2nd May 98 at the Homebush Public School Hall in Sydney on the occasion of the launching by the Hon. John Aquilina, M.P., Minister for Education and Training, of a book on 'Tamils of Australia' authored by Dr. A. Kandiah. It was a well attended function and the Chairman, Dr. N. Sriskandarajah, President of the Eelam Tamil Association welcomed the gathering and touched on the state of Tamil affairs in India and Sri Lanka. The opening address was by Dr. A. Balasubramaniam, President, 'Abaya Karam' on the topic of 'Early Tamil Arrivals in Australia', He related his own experiences as one of the early Sri Lankan Tamils to migrate to Australia.*

Then followed the presentation of four Research Papers, which were all of a high standard. The first was entitled 'The Tamil People - a Brief Description', presented by Dr. Sridevy Sriskandarajah, a Research Scientist at the University of Sydney. This was mainly about the history and tribulations of the Sri Lankan Tamils. The second was on 'Tamil Language and its Dialects - A Brief Study' by Dr. E.V. Packianathan, a former Chief Librarian of the Jaffna Library. It was a well presented study of the Tamil language - its past, present and future. The third paper was on 'Tamil Culture and Traditions' by Mr. K. Sivanathan, which explained many features of Tamil traditions including the nature of arranged marriages, wedding ceremonies etc. The last paper on 'Tamil Literature' was presented by Mr. P. Gnanakaran, a Solicitor, who traced the history of Tamil Literature from the Sangam period to the present.

The Federal M.P., The Hon. Paul Zammit addressed the gathering and this was followed by the book launch.

Mr. Ana Pararajasingam of the Australian Federation of Tamil Associations and Dr. Geoffrey Oddie of the Department of History, University of Sydney reviewed the book. Dr. Tony Pun, Chairman of the Ethnic Communities Council and councillors of the Strathfield Municipal Council also spoke.

The function terminated after a vote of thanks by Dr. Kandiah, a brilliant exhibition of Bharatha Natyam by the students of Natanalaya, the Director of which is Mrs. Jayaluxmy Kandiah, a song by Mrs. Kala Gnani and a sumptuous Sri Lankan dinner, which was enjoyed by all.

Raffle: *The Eelam Tamil Association organised a raffle offering big prizes and collected 28,000 Australian dollars for Rehabilitation in North and East of Sri Lanka.*

Young Asian Competitors Shine at Croydon Music Festival

The well organised Croydon Music Festival for Asian Music held from 24th to 26th April 1998 in Whitgift School Hall, Nottingham Road, Haling Park, South Croydon drew large numbers of very young competitors from different parts of London and its suburbs and a very high standard was attained. Our thanks go to the Croydon Music Festival for promoting Asian Music.

The following were placed first in each of the competitions, and some of them won the award and trophies indicated.

Vocal Duets *Aarthi Pagayatselvan & Krishananthan Ambalawarner, Pupils of South London Tamil School*

Instrumental Duets *Arabi Indrakumar & Bairavi Indrakumar, Pupils of Mrs Kalaivani Indrakumar.*

Ensemble of Instruments & Singers

Beginners *Bhavan's Beginner's Orchestra.*

Intermediate *Bhavan's Intermediate Orchestra.*

Ensemble of Singers

Beginners *South London Tamil School Parasakti Group, Winners of Shree ji Maharaj Trophy.*

Intermediate *Rasikaa Priya Group, Winners of Narayana Swarup Swami Trophy.*

Advanced Group *Bhavan's Advanced Group, Winners of Shahajanand Trophy*

Vocal Solo

Beginners *Aarthi Pangayatselvan of South London Tamil School, Winner of Pramukh Swami Maharaj Trophy*

Intermediate *(joint)* *Indu Pathmabaskaran, Bhavan's Intermediate Group. Mayuri Kandasamy, Pupil of Mrs. Manorama Prasad, Winners of Hare Krishna Trophy.*

Advanced *(Joint)* *Kumar Ragunathan, Pupil of Mrs. Manorama Prasad, Bhairavi Ganeswaran, Pupil of Mrs. Saraswathi Packiarajah, Winner of Croydon Music Festival Talwar Award.*

Instrumental Not Stringed over 18

Advanced *Kiruba Rajasingam of Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan.*

Open *(Joint)* *K. Marino Janahan Pupil of Mr. T.V. Gopalkrishnan & Priyatharshen Thevarajah of Bharthiya Vidya Bhavan.*

Vocal *(Advanced)* *Geetha Yogachandran, Pupil of Mrs. Manorama Prasad, Winner P.S. Talwar J.P. Trophy.*

Stringed Instruments Solo _ Under 18

Beginners *Jananee Sundaram, Bharathiya Vidya Bhavan, Winner of P.S. Talwar, J.P. Trophy.*

Intermediate *Mathan Ganesu, Pupil of Mr. T.L. Kothandapani, Winner of Pramukh Swami Trophy.*

Advanced *Sangeetha Gajendra, Pupil of Mrs. Sivatharani Sivathasan.*

Stringed Instruments

Open - Over 18 *Bhayiravi Ganeswaran, Pupil of Mrs. Kalaivani Indrakumar, Winner of Tamil Times Trophy.*

Non-Stringed Instruments

Under 18

Beginners *Vithushan Ehandarajah, Pupil of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Winner of Amrut Mahotsav Trophy.*

Inter & Advanced *Prasanna Thevarajah, Pupil of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Winner of P.S. Talwar Trophy.*

Ensemble of Instruments

Beginners *Swara Laya Group.*

Intermediate *London Tamil Veena Centre.*

Advanced *South Indian Percussion Group.*

Miruthala's Bharatha Natya Arangetram in Germany

The Bharatha Natya Arangetram of Anita Miruthala daughter of Yamuna and Rajakumaran of Mulheim, Germany and pupil of Guru Savithiri Emmanuel took place at the Heinrich Heine Gym Hall, Mulheimerstr, Oberhhausen on 28th March 1998 before an impressive gathering of Tamil expatriate families and local German residents. It was one of the most spectacular Arangetrams seen in Germany. Guru Savithiri is a disciple of the genius Kalai Maamani Veeramany Iyer of Jaffna and Miruthula is the eighth student to graduate under the talented and dedicated care of her Guru.

The dancer depicted 14 different pieces of the various art forms, which the audience enjoyed with rapt attention culminating in the Kurathi dance. This was different from the usual form in that it depicted the woeful suffering of the Tamil population back in the homeland, and foresaw their emancipation in the near future. All the songs were in Tamil - a noteworthy feature. Miruthula reciprocated by her flawless footwork and her remarkable facial expressions to suit the meaning of the songs. The dance for the Navarasa song was her speciality in which she depicted the nine Bhavas and received a thunderous applause, well deservedly, from the audience.

Two items of dance were noteworthy - the aphinaya by her for the two Christian based songs 'Annai Mariye' and 'Jothi Valar Emmaane'.

The orchestra consisted of Kannan (pupil of Pon Suntheralingam) : Vocal, Guru Savithiri: Nattuvangam, S. Piranavanathan: Miruthangam, Chu Rathakrishnan (Madras): Violin and S. Thevakuruparan: Tabla. the show was compered in Tamil by S. Valentine and in German by Subashini Kalainathan. All did their parts well and it was a scintillating evening of entertainment.

Pastor Dr. Peter Arockiadoos, Director, Theological Centre, Chennai, who was the Chief Guest, complimented the dancer for her great precision and expertise and added that he was surprisingly pleased that Bharatha Natyam of such high standard could be produced in countries outside India.

Pastor Dr. Jeya Segaram, Director, Catholic Tamil Organisation, Germany and Parish Priest, who as Chairman conducted the whole programme, praised the dancer's parents for their great efforts and said that he was glad to note that the traditional Bharatha Natyam happily blended with Christian-based culture and depicted the present sufferings of the Tamils in their homeland. Mr. K. Sivanathan, Director, Tamil Cultural Association also spoke.

Muruthala's rhythmic and graceful limb movements and skill combined with her good grasp of time and 'adavas' are sure to create in her a top class dancer, provided she takes it to her heart to develop her skills by constant practice and dedication to the art. Miruthula has a bright future.

Raja Kadchevy, Australia.

First International Saiva Conference in Britain

Elaborate plans are underway for the first International Conference in the UK on Saivaism, on the 11th and 12th July 1998. The venue for both Saturday and Sunday is the Lewisham Theatre in Catford in South East London. Programmes on both days begin at 9.30am and finish at 9.30pm, with mid-day meals, tea and refreshments provided. A galaxy of eminent speakers from abroad are due to participate.

This two day conference is a major initia

Continued on page 33

Continued from page 32

project of The Federation of Saiva (Hindu) Temples, UK formed recently. The theme of the Inaugural Conference is Saivism in the West. A key objective is to increase awareness of Saivaism particularly among the younger generation in the country. There are a number of workshops and film shows on religion and culture under the auspices of Saiva Munnetta Sangam (UK), running in parallel with the lecture programmes. Scholars from Tamil Nadu notably Chennai and the University of Thanjavur and from Sri Lanka and Malaysia are expected to join local invited speakers to address the conference.

Dignitaries who are due to participate are Thavathiru Santhalinga Ramasamy Adigal from Perur Aadheenam; Professor Saraswathy Ramanathan; Dr. K. Karunakaran, Vice Chancellor, Tamil University, Thanjavur; Dr. G. Bhaskaran, Tamil University, Thanjavur, Vidwaati Vasantha Vaithiyanathan; Thiru Thamilaruvi T. Sivakumaran; Thiru K. Umamaheswaran and Thiru K. Kaneshalingam from Eelam; Dr. K. Loganathan, World Saiva Council, Malaysia and Thavathiru Sivananthi Adigal from Meihandar Aatheenam, UK.

Both days will end with cultural programmes provided by the children from a number of local organisations - London Tamil Centre, South London Tamil School, Navalar Tamil Academy and Kingston Institute of Tamil Culture.

All this for a mere £7 a day to meet the basic expenses. Tickets are already on sale at Temples and those wishing to attend are kindly informed that tickets have to be purchased in advance to facilitate catering and other arrangements.

For further details please get in touch with Messrs A.T.S. Ratnasingham, Chairman, Tel: 0181 296 9797; N. Satchithananthan, Secretary, Tel: 0181 690 0401; or S. Karunalingam, Treasurer, Tel: 0181 900 1279 or on Fax: 0181 542 0229.

Bharatha Natya Arangetram in Switzerland

Two teenage sisters, Kubojini and Reegana, daughters of Mahendran and Rudradevi of Kilinochchi, now resident in Basel, Switzerland had their Bharatha Natya Arangetram at The Music Theatre, Steinenberg, Basel, Switzerland on 6th June 1998. They are disciples of Natya Kalaimani Krishnabavani Sritharan, director, Kalaniketan Natanalaya School, Basel.

The programme commenced with a Pushpanjali in Amirthavarshini Raga and Athi Tala followed by Tisra Alarippu in Nattaikurinji Raga. After the Jathiswaram and Sabtham, the Varnam 'Samiyai Alaithu' in Ragamalikai on Lord Siva was well received by the audience.

The second half commenced with the item 'Meenakshi goes to War', an episode from the Dance Drama 'Meenakshi Kalyanam' followed by a Patham on Kathirgama Murugan. The popular patham 'Chinna Chinna Patham' in Kapi Ragam was performed by Kubojini and her excellent bhava brought rounds of applause from the audience. After the dance 'Snake and the Peacock' by the sisters the proceedings concluded with a lively Thillana in Hindola Raga and Athi Tala.

The Chief Guest Natya Kalaimani Arulmohan, Guest Speakers Mr. A. Senthilnathan, Mr. Alagu Gunaseelan and Miss Mariana Rufan spoke on the Development and Future of Tamil Culture and Fine Arts in Europe and blessed the Mahendran sisters. The programme was compered by Jayanthi Mala, a former news presenter of Rupavahini Television of Sri Lanka. The orchestra consisted of Smt Krishnabavani Sritharan - Nattuvangam, Smt Ambika Thamotheram (London) - Vocal, Sri Muthu Sivaraja (London) - Mirudangam, Smt Komala Kandiah (Paris) - Violin, and Sri A. Shanmugadas - Tabla.

Artistic Excellence

Once in a while we do come cross an Arangetram true to its name and substance. The two sisters Pamela (14) and Poornima (11) who had their Bharata Natya Arangetram at Croydon's Ashcroft Theatre on 4th May, danced through a standard repetoire of items which revealed the artistic excellence of the Natya amsams: Jathi variations, theermanams and abhinaya artistry.

Daughters of Mr. & Mrs. Premavrithan of Kerala origin, learned Bharata Natyam under Pushkala Gopal and Unnikrishnan of the well known Mudralaya School of Dancing in London for nearly ten years. Also their occasional participation in Onam and other festivals was an added advantage. Throughout, in this programme they showed remarkable understanding of and familiarity with the steps and abhinayas which captivated the attention of the audience. The programme consisted of the usual Paddadi and in some places reflected the Dananjayan School of Chennai, once the training ground of the two gurus. For instance, the Sabdam piece, Thandai Muzhanga, describing the exploits of child Muruga, in the same musical formation as Ayar Seriyar was first introduced by Dananyayans. The Varnam in Kalyani, titled Nrithyopaharam, was elaborately choreographed for the girls using Krishna frolics, particularly thrilled the younger Poornima, who danced a special solo Panthattam delightfully. Besides a Jayadeva Ashtapathi, a Sivashtapathi was introduced to mime the exploits of Shiva. The final Thillana was notable for its jathi variations and formations. On the whole we admired the ease with which the sisters executed the classical art.

Smt Pushkala Gopal was impeccable and directed the dances and the musicians. Vocal support was by Devi Srikanda, a Mudralaya artiste. A full fledged orchestra consisting of leading artistes, Somasundara Desigar (Mridangam), Malini Thanabalasingam (Veena), L. Kothandapani (Violin), P. Gnanavaradan (Flute) and Sithamparanathan (Morsing) played with understanding.

Sivapatha Sundaram.

Doctor Tharmalingam Honoured

Dr. S.A. Tharmalingam, retired medical practitioner, former Mayor of the Jaffna Municipal Council and Chairman of Tamil Eelam Liberation Front was honoured at a public meeting held to celebrate his 90th birthday at Trinity Community Centre Hall, Eastham London E12.

Among others Mrs. Mann, Messrs Balasundaram, Fatimaharan, Sampanathan, Drs. Rajan Namasivayam and Navaratnam spoke on the doctor's commitment and concern for his fellow Tamils over the years and wished him many more years of happy retired life. Dr. S. Pasupathy Rajah was the Chairman of the meeting.

Dr. Tharmalingam resides at 5 Windy Hill, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex CM13 2HF.

J. KULENDRAN
Beddington Insurance Services (Wimbledon) Ltd

157A Hartfield Road, Wimbledon,
London SW19 3TJ
Tel: 0181-543 5181 Fax: 0181-543 0728

MOTOR
- Fast cars
- Young drivers
- Convictions, etc.

HOUSEHOLD
- Contents and Buildings
- Commercial and Domestic Funding

COMMERCIAL
- Business Insurance
- Liability
- Indemnity, etc.

Fully Computerised Guaranteed Quotes and Instant Cover For Motor Vehicles
Payment by Instalments Available

WE EXCEL IN THE PERSONAL SERVICE WE PROVID

Nathan & Chelva Solicitors

YOUR SATISFACTION IS OUR HAPPINESS
We offer you Prompt and Proper Service in all Legal Matters. Legal Aid Work also undertaken.

Partners: K. Chelva-Nayagam LLB, T. Sri Pathma Nathan, (Former Advocate of Sri Lanka)

169 Tooting High Street, London SW17 0SY
Tel: 0181-672 1800 Fax: 0181-672 0105

T.S.T. SKY TRAVEL

- **We offer you flights on scheduled airlines at a fair price**
- **We specialise in flights to Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia, Singapore, USA, Canada & Australia**
- *We will gladly refund the price difference if you can convince us that you could have got the same ticket cheaper elsewhere on the same date of purchase.*

Please contact Mr. S. Thiruchelvam

Office
255 Haydons Road,
Wimbledon
London SW19 8TY
Tel: 0181-543 3318

Residence
69 Toynbee Road
Wimbledon
London SW20 8SH
Tel: 0181-542 5140

AIR SAVERS

ATOL 74848

World-Wide Travel Agents
ATOL Bonded for Protection of Clients
Colombo/Madras/Australia/Singapore
Kuala Lumpur/Toronto. Open 7 Days a week
90, Leamington Avenue, Morden, Surrey, SM4 4DN. **Tel: 0181 408 1671**
Mobile No: 0961 401260
Seats Available in all Major Airlines

ANCHORAGE

Residential Care Home for Elderly
Regd. with LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON
Member of NATIONAL CARE HOME ASSOCIATION

30 WOODSTOCK ROAD, CROYDON CR0 1JR
Situated in an elite residential area close to Whitgift Shopping Centre, BR Station and Bus Routes
Providing long or short term care in a homely atmosphere
Double and Single rooms with different views, some with en-suites.
for further details please Tel:
0181 667 0093

4 **facts about Tamil Pages 1998**

- **The largest freely circulated Tamil publication in Europe. (16,220 copies).**
- **Packed with useful information.**
- **A cheap & effective way to advertise your business.**
- **The one and only Social & Commercial Tamil Directory in Britain**

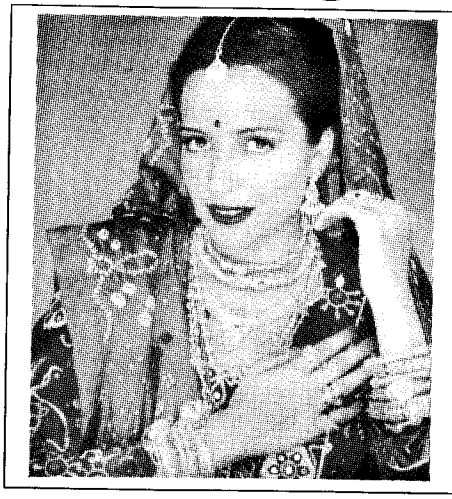
For your free copy please send a self addressed C5 envelope with 38p stamp or £1.00 cheque in favour of British Tamil Directories.

BRITISH tamil DIRECTORIES
British Tamil Directories
52 Kingsley Road, Wimbledon
London SW19 8HF

Tel: 0181 543 2126/0181 640 7230. FAX: 0181 540 3442
web : http:/tamilpages.luxmi.com

The First & Best Tamil Jeweller In London

VISIT US NOW FOR LATEST 22CT. GOLD JEWELLERIES



WIDE RANGE OF STOCKS ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Thali Kodi, Necklace sets, Pathakkams, Various types of Ear Studs

Jimmikkies, Panchayuthams, Chains, Bangles Etc. Etc...

WE ARE AT YOUR SERVICE SEVEN DAYS A WEEK

WE PERFORM THALI POOJA AS WELL

WESTERN JEWELLERS

230 UPPER TOOTING ROAD, TOOTING, LONDON SW17 7EW
TEL: 0181-767 3445, FAX: 0181-767 3753
Web: http://www.luxmi.com/western

ATOL 73782

SKY WINGS LTD

WORLD WIDE TRAVEL AGENTS

IATA

"WE ARE ATOL BONDED FOR THE PROTECTION OF OUR CLIENTS"

TOOTING BROADWAY

Call: Pathmabaskaran, Shankar or Dash

119 Tooting High street, London SW17 0SY

Tel: 0181-672 9111 (6 Lines)

INSTANT 24HR. TICKETING

Internet: http://skywings.co.uk E.Mail: bala@skywings.co.uk Mobile: 0850 876 921, Fax: 0181-672 0951

VISA SERVICE AVAILABLE FOR INDIA, USA, CANADA AND MANY MORE DESTINATIONS

ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS

MasterCard VISA

MAIN AGENT FOR AIRLANKA

ROYAL JORDANIAN الملكية الأردنية

AGENT FOR BRITISH AIRWAYS, EMIRATES, GULF AIR, BALKAN, MALAYSIAN & QATAR AIRWAY

We are holding seats THROUGHOUT THE YEAR TO

☆COLOMBO ☆MADRAS ☆SINGAPORE
☆KUALA LUMPUR ☆AUSTRALIA
☆USA ☆CANADA

Open 7 days a week from 0930 till 2130hrs

SHIPPING – AIR FREIGHT – TRAVEL

UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE – PERSONAL EFFECTS, HOUSEHOLD GOODS
VEHICLES, MACHINERY ETC.

To **COLOMBO** *AND OTHER WORLD WIDE DESTINATIONS*

MAIN AGENT FOR AIRLANKA

Passenger Tickets and Unaccompanied Baggage

Bonded by the Civil Aviation Authority for your financial security

Please Contact Us For Various Discounted Fares To Colombo And Other World Wide Destinations

GLEN CARRIERS LIMITED

14 Allied Way, off Warple Way, Acton, London W3 0RQ
Telephone: 0181 740 8379/0181 749 0595
Fax: 0181 740 4229
BONDED WAREHOUSE
Laksiriseva, 253/3 Avissawella Road, Colombo 14 Tel: 575576

ATOL 74395

APPLE AIR

MAIN AGENT for COLOMBO
on
BRITISH AIRWAYS QATAR BALKAN

TEL: 0181 563 0364
FAX: 0181 748 4912

BALKAN	-	£350 + TAX
KUWAIT	-	£376 + TAX
GULF	-	£396 + TAX
EMIRATES	-	£475 + TAX
QATAR	-	£370 + TAX
BA	-	ON REQUEST

ATOL 73808

Main Agents for
BALKAN, QATAR & BA
338A King Street,
London W6 0RR

IATA

Travel Insurance plus Hotel Reservations

For All Type of Insurance

ARM Associates

Home Contents & Building Insurance Specialist
32 Abbots Lane, Kenley, Surrey
Tel: 0181-763 2221 Fax: 0181-763 2220

Home, Motor, Business Insurance

P. SRINIVASAN

Life Insurance & Pensions Specialist
For a Free comparison quote on Term Assurance, please contact:

0181-763 2221

PIA

Regulated by Personal Investment Authority for Investment Business only.

http://www.p-srinivasan-arm.co.uk